

gining "Sheila of Big Wreck Cove"

SMITH'S

1921

MAGAZINE

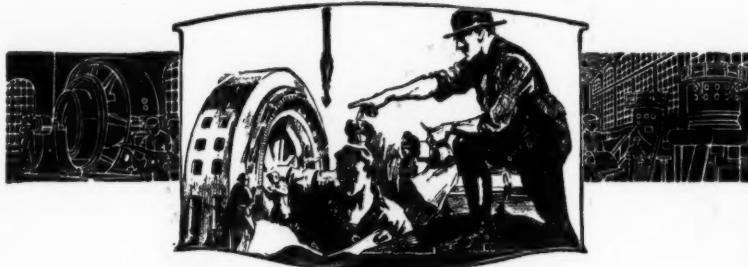
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Vol. XXXIII

No. 6

SMITH'S MAGAZINE

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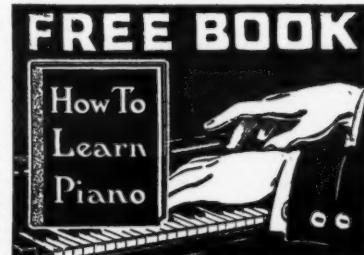
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Such was my running mate's answer when I told him that I intended to learn the Selling game. True, I didn't know the first thing about Selling, and it didn't seem as if I was cut out for it. Clerking in the railway mail service was far removed from selling goods, and I didn't blame Jim for trying to discourage me.

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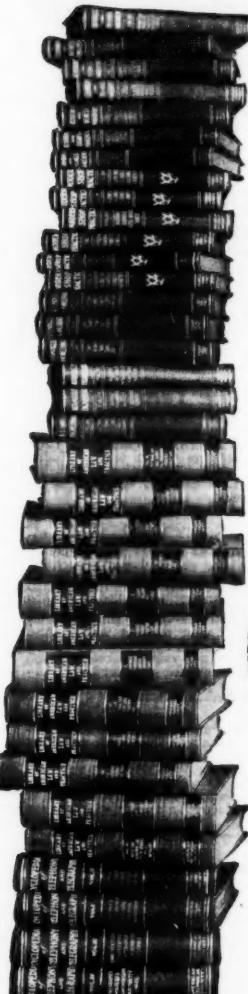
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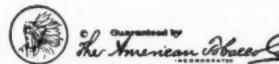
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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 33

OCTOBER, 1921

Number 6

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By Thomas McMorrow

Author of "Taking Care of Rosie," "Sharps and Flats," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

An unusual story of the theater. The road to Broadway is often devious, but Miss D'Arcy's landing was accomplished rather skillfully and originally, wasn't it?

BUT I tell you, Tully, it is not *acting!*" said Joubert.

The playwright shrugged his shoulders helplessly. He had argued the matter for a week, and the debate had got nowhere. He lit a cigarette and puffed it contentedly.

"I wish we'd stayed in New York," he said, looking through the chamber window at Main Street in Bushville.

"I like that," said the younger man. "You entice me out of a comfortable home with a promise to show me the great emotional actress of the age, rat-tle me two thousand miles, feed me like a traveling salesman, and sleep me in old trundle beds, and *you* wish we'd stayed in New York! Well, I swear! When the story of this trip gets out I'll be the reigning joke of Forty-second Street. Joubert & Joubert rushing around the country looking for an actress to play the lead in their newest production! It's funny."

"It was most kind and sacrificing of you," said Tully dryly.

Joubert looked sharply at him.

"*Wasn't* it?"

"I said it was," replied Tully, unable to suppress his smile. "You've been

following Miss D'Arcy around for the last two weeks in kindness to me and not because you think that she is a competent actress. Haven't you, Joubert?"

He laughed aloud in friendly malice.

"Not entirely out of friendship," admitted Joubert. "I had hopes that she is the woman we want for the part. I told you I thought so the first night we saw her, back there in Benson's Corners. I felt quite sure of her that night. And she is a marvelous girl, Tully! So fine and womanly, so deep-natured, so true-hearted, such feeling and—"

He paused and drew a breath.

"Go on," yawned Tully. "Go on! Feels great, doesn't it, hey?"

"Oh, you be blessed!" grumbled Joubert. "You're a cold-blooded rascal, Tully. If you had warm blood in your veins, you'd be working for wages instead of writing heart throbs for New York audiences to sniffle over. Oh, I know you! A vivisectionist, that's what you are. Operating on your audiences' insides and making them cry, while you laugh in your sleeve. You think I'm a sentimental fool, don't you?"

"Only in this particular instance, old man," said Tully soothingly. "Hereto-

fore I have been rapt in admiration as I watched you play with maidenly affections and avoid getting burned. Only in the case of Miss D'Arcy, you've lost your head this time, Joubert."

"My dear fellow," exclaimed Joubert, "permit me to think that I know an actress when I see one! If I give my approval to Miss D'Arcy, she is a made woman, and she can go on inflicting herself on the American stage for the rest of her natural life. We're hopelessly cluttered now with performers who've made their hit in this or that little part, and who go on imitating themselves forever and ever. I admit that Miss D'Arcy is wonderful in this silly play of hers, but I tell you she is simply fortunate in having found a part that was made for her. The part of *Clara*, the adventuress, in your play, wouldn't suit her at all. She couldn't grasp it. She would do very well in the emotional passages between *Clara* and her husband and child, but that trashy stuff doesn't require acting. She would lean safely on your genius for writing trash, Tully. The lines need only be spoken intelligibly and the audience will imagine the rest. But the scene where *Clara* shows her teeth and disowns her child for the sake of catching the millionaire—that scene is the heart of the play, and it is a slap in the face to the audience, and it takes a hard hand to put it over. And I tell you"—Joubert paused, and shook his head slowly and convincingly—"she couldn't do it. She couldn't! It's not in her."

Tully threw away the cigarette.

"Very good. Let's forget it. What time have you got?"

"Ten after six."

"Let's get a bite and catch the seventeen for New York. We'll be just as comfortable in a sleeper to-night as we would be here."

"I wonder," demurred Joubert.

"There's a local at eleven-twenty, if

you must see Miss D'Arcy perform again, but it's only a day coach."

Joubert considered.

"Let's eat," he suggested, postponing the decision. "Oh, I say, Tully, you won't mind eating alone again to-night, will you, like a good fellow?"

"Better alone than in dull company, my boy," said the playwright, patting his friend on the back. "Tip me the wink when it is time to rush over and congratulate the happy couple!"

They descended to the dining room of the Bushville Hotel. Joubert went to Miss D'Arcy's table. She was waiting for him, and reading an old New York newspaper. Tully bowed to Miss D'Arcy and seated himself at the proprietor's private table, whence he could watch Joubert. Tully had not much delicacy of feeling. He had studied the mechanism of emotion too successfully.

"We must return to New York tomorrow," said Joubert, breaking bread.

Miss D'Arcy looked alertly up from her soup.

She was a pretty, blond lady, in rugged health. She had all her teeth, except the later wisdoms, an admirable digestion, clear whites to her eyes, genuine red lips and pink cheeks, an excellent figure, and a strong natural growth of fair hair. And she was more than a doll; she was a clever young woman. To Joubert she appeared altogether delightful and desirable, and it must be taken that she had created this impression deliberately. I defy the very devil to learn anything, beyond what she wants him to know, about a fit and clever girl in the course of a casual acquaintance.

"Have you decided on your *Clara*?" she asked, with an affection of polite interest.

"No," he said.

"*Morituri, te salutamus!*" she said whimsically. "You have seen the pick of the gaslight circuit, and it is something, at least, to have performed under



Tully was grinning and nodding at him, and glancing aside to include Miss D'Arcy in his friendly gesture.

the eyes of Cæsar. So it's thumbs down for us all. And who is going to play *Clara*?"

He had discussed the matter with her, and he had told her that he was seeking a star for his new production, and that he had watched a dozen prospects work during the past month. He had not told her why he had followed

Miss D'Arcy about for the last two weeks of one-night stands. But she knew that.

"I think it will be Maxine Judson," he said. "She has the temperament the part calls for."

"Very capable girl," she nodded. "I was reading about her in the newspaper just now. Have you seen it?"

"Oh, that!" he said slightlying. "Not a very pretty mess, was it? You mean that action for alienation of affections. But that's her personal affair. I don't want a nun for the part of *Clara*. I don't care if Miss Judson alienates the affections of every foolish millionaire on Broadway. It will help her to draw. I like her all the better for it, to tell the truth!"

"Of course, you know that I had hopes," she said, studying the dinner card.

He leaned toward her across the cruet stand.

"I am going to offer Miss D'Arcy another part," he said; "a part which I hope she will be pleased to play. I am going to offer her a part which is more important to me than a thousand *Claras*, a part in which I think she will be happy."

"Speak, Cæsar!" she said. "Yours to command!"

He glanced stealthily toward the proprietor's table. Tully was eating, and listening to his host's conversation with an expression of acute interest so as to avoid having to talk.

"Miss D'Arcy," said Joubert earnestly, "I am not a romantic boy. But like every man alive I look into every woman's face to seek my leading lady, and I have found her while looking for a *Clara*. I am going back to Broadway to pick a star for Tully's play, but I hope to take a leading lady with me none the less, for I have looked into a woman's face and found the only lady that can be my lead in the comedy of life."

She wrinkled her delicate brows.

"You are going to marry, Cæsar?" she interpreted, as though the statement could have no personal significance.

Joubert was quite out of breath. A proposal of marriage is not usually shouted, but it taxes the lungs in its own way.

He hedged about, seeking, as men will, to make his proposal appear as a

dispassionately reasoned syllogism, which a proposal is not. A man's announcement that he is romantically related to a lady is either a statement of a bald and uncompromising fact, or it is a piece of cheek.

"Miss D'Arcy," he said, "you are wasting yourself upon the stage. Let me talk plainly to you. You will never succeed as an actress, because your nature is too simple. You act from the heart, and not from calculation.

"I have watched you play for the last two weeks, and you have thrilled me—me, Joubert! But I have also had the privilege of knowing you personally, and I see that you thrilled me as a woman and not as an actress. In this little melodrama of yours, you are simply playing your own sweet, natural self. This play of Tully's is not the vehicle for you. You could not portray Tully's hideous *Clara*, a selfish and mercenary adventuress. You could not adequately conceive the soul of such a person. You could not grasp her psychology. An actress must have within herself the possibilities of the character she is portraying, and I would be very sorry to see you try it and fail—or try it and succeed."

He was working up to it. The logic of the matter was clearing. It was hot in the stuffy little dining room, but he did not perspire in spite of his beating heart. He had grown pale.

"I am sure you intend to be kind," she said gravely.

She knew he was going to propose. Any woman knows when a man is going to propose, and ordinarily any woman is going to accept if she hears the sufferer out.

She liked Joubert. There was nothing tropic about her sentiment for him; she liked him about as well as most women like the men they marry: an open-eyed and sensible liking. He was youngish, clever, prominent, romantic beneath his protective veneer of

worldly-wiseness, not so bad-looking, and in an unexceptionable state of physical preservation as a high-class metropolitan business man must be. He could make her; and she was ambitious. Before his interest in her had mounted even to a tepid blood-heat she had considered him for a husband. He passed. He would have been surprised, not to say shocked, and not to say disillusioned, to know the degree of detail to which his future life had been planned. This is not to be taken as a remark derogatory to Miss D'Arcy. Women must be foresighted, and ready to marry any one of a dozen men if they are to marry at all. Of course, there are always soul mates, affinities, and great and only passions.

But she wanted light on one point.

"Let me ask you," she said directly. "If you married an actress, would you permit your wife to continue on the stage?"

"Certainly not!" he said.

"Even if she had a great career before her?"

"There is no greater career for a woman than marriage," said Joubert with majesty.

Miss D'Arcy nodded her fair head slowly several times. She held his eyes smilingly.

He coughed, picked up a glass of water, and drank it. The water didn't hearten him much. He would have liked a slap on the shoulder from the late John Barleycorn.

Miss D'Arcy was waiting.

Joubert was slipping to the plunge. It was an awful and a solemn moment.

"Miss D'Arcy!" he gasped.

Tully's voice crossed the room.

"I say, Joubert, tell Miss D'Arcy that funny story of the Jew whose little boy fell off the dock, that one the Englishman told us in the smoker last night. Make him tell it, Miss D'Arcy; it's a scream! Go on and tell it, Joubert!"

Joubert swung around fiercely, and

yet with a sensation of relief and reprieve. Tully was grinning and nodding at him, and glancing aside to include Miss D'Arcy in his friendly gesture. Joubert coughed loudly to prove that the peculiar growl which had come from his throat was a natural and neutral ebullition.

He avoided Tully's eyes.

"It's a fool story," he said lamely.

"Tell it," called Tully laughingly.

"Do tell it," said Miss D'Arcy, smiling sweetly at Tully.

The playwright was nodding and smiling, and waiting to enjoy Miss D'Arcy's reaction to the comical tale. It was an absurd position.

"There was a Jew, once, on a pier with his little boy," began Joubert woodenly, "and the child fell into the water."

"How interesting," commented Miss D'Arcy, with a set smile.

"A brave man dived over and saved the child from drowning, and restored him to his father," mumbled Joubert, with a venomous glance toward the proprietor's table.

"How perfectly *lovely!*" said Miss D'Arcy.

"The Jew hurried away with the little boy," continued Joubert, with a ghastly smile. "He returned shortly, and demanded to speak to the rescuer. The brave man stepped up, and modestly avowed his deed. And the Jew then said to the rescuer——"

Joubert stopped, overcome with vexation. He cast a black look at Tully, who threw himself back in his chair and shook with laughter, although the story was not new to him and he had laughed not at all in the smoker.

"What did he say?" he implored. "Go on, Joubert! Oh, *my!* The way you tell it makes it the funniest story I've ever heard! Now I have a new one for Forty-second Street! Isn't it a scream, Miss D'Arcy?"

"It is extremely diverting, I am sure," said the lady.



"Get out!" she ordered. "I will hear no more from you! How dare you come here and disgrace me in your pauper's rags? From this night on, you are no father of mine!"

She brought her smile around and played it on Joubert.

"After the show?" she asked.

"After the show," he accepted.

They arose from table and went out on to the veranda. Tully joined them. Joubert was offended, and was properly rude to him. Thereupon Tully ignored him and devoted himself to Miss D'Arcy. Joubert lifted his hat and walked away.

He entered the town jeweler's.

"Let me see some rings," he demanded. "Some solitaire rings!"

He proposed to slip a ring of some sort upon Miss D'Arcy's finger that evening. He wanted this visible proof of his success.

When he returned to the hotel veranda Tully had gone.

"He has some business in town," explained Miss D'Arcy. "He asks you to keep his seat for him at the theater."

Joubert was pleased. He preferred to be alone.

He walked beside Miss D'Arcy in silence to the theater. He left her at the stage entrance and returned to the lobby.

He watched the audience gathering, and wondered if there would be any special demonstration. Miss D'Arcy was a native of the country.

She had told him that she was raised in Chester Hill, which was near by. She had told him so in answer to his question, and had not sought to excuse herself nor to extol Chester Hill. He thought that her life there had not been particularly happy. He could understand that; he himself was New York born, with a New Yorker's conviction that people who live in unkempt and unsightly places such as the country must live unhappily.

The natives of Bushville had not greeted Miss D'Arcy with any great hosannahs that afternoon. They knew her. She was prominent, for a native of the neighborhood, and her fellow

countrymen were willing to be proud of her provided she was proud of them. But they weren't dazzled by her. The landlord of the hotel had asked Joubert across the cigar counter if it was really true that she was earning one hundred and twenty-five dollars per week. Joubert had said that it was credible.

"It's a sight of money," said the landlord, "but—" And then he had made a wry face and shook his head, to the amusement of Tully, who had promptly cultivated the innkeeper. Tully was always cultivating queer characters in the way of business.

"A prophet in her own country," suggested Joubert.

"Rather on the contrary," said Tully smartly. "The profit seems to be the only thing they honor!"

The theater was filling up with rustling rustics. Joubert went in to his seat. Three fiddles struck up down front, and a man in white shirt sleeves lit a row of gas jets at the foot of the stage, and then went about turning down the lights in the body of the house. From time to time he turned to the audience to greet friends and to hiss strangers into silence.

The name of the play was "The Lights of London Town." New Yorkers will remember it well who will also remember when Edgar Allan Poe lived in the Bronx, and when people moved out to Twenty-third Street for the sake of the children. There's nothing like good country air to put the roses in their cheeks.

Miss D'Arcy was an erring daughter in "The Lights of London Town." She was driven from the door, in due course, during inclement weather. Her father was supposed to be a Londoner, but he was a good, old-fashioned New England dad at heart, the kind that consults an almanac when he learns of his daughter's error. This old gentleman had picked a beautiful evening for his pe-

culiar purpose, and the tin sheet rumbled and the lightning glared as he threw wide the canvas door and pointed an inflexible finger toward the storm. "You are no daughter of mine. Go!"

At this point the upright father is struck by a bolt of lightning. It only cripples him, as he is very hard-boiled. In fact, he recovers entirely after the piece is over, and takes a curtain call and makes a speech, but while he is still under the mollifying influence of the bolt he forgives his daughter and kisses his rag grandchild and acts generally like a good fellow feeling mellow. The moral of the piece is that stern and rock-bound fathers should be knocked silly. At least it seems so.

Miss D'Arcy's part was to cling pleadingly to the male actors, to cuddle her rag doll, to pray, and to give her rock-bound father a good talking-to while he holds the door for her. She did all these things very acceptably, and had the best wishes of the audience. One cavalier from Chester Hill threw a large and hard potato, and nearly fore stalled the lightning. His heart was in the right place.

Joubert sat enthralled. He followed Miss D'Arcy with shining eyes.

A little old man came wandering down the darkened aisle.

He had a ticket in his hand, and was trying to find his seat. Some one looked at the ticket by a pocket flash, and directed the late comer aright. He slipped into the place waiting for Tully.

Miss D'Arcy was off stage at the time.

"Haven't you made a mistake?" asked Joubert.

"Have I, then?" asked the old man, drawing his face out and rubbing his wrinkled hands placatingly together. "Will ye look at it then, ye that have the eyes?"

"It's the right ticket," admitted Joubert, after examining the slip. "And may I ask if you bought it at the door?"

"I did not," confessed the little man nervously. "'Twas given me by a gentleman who saw me standing outside waiting for a sight of me daughter. And are ye Mister Joubert? I was to tell ye that the gentleman will not be here the night."

"Oh, Tully!" nodded Joubert.

Miss D'Arcy entered, accompanied by a dark and smiling villain.

"There she is!" cried the little old man, jouncing up and down in his seat. "There's me little girl! There's me little Norah herself, glory be to God!"

"You don't say!" chuckled Joubert. "Are you Miss D'Arcy's father? This is very fortunate!"

"Me name is Darcey," said the old man, formally shaking hands with Joubert. "Peter Darcey. Pleased to meet ye, Mister Joubert!"

Joubert caught the little fellow's arm and steadied him in his seat. There were now two in the audience, at least, who watched Miss D'Arcy worshipfully.

The curtain went down between acts. "Miss D'Arcy told me that her home was near by," said Joubert. "You live at Chester Hill, don't you?"

"No," said Peter Darcey in a low voice. "I used to live beyant at Chester Hill, but I don't live there no more."

He studied his rusty black trousers. Then he glanced up defiantly.

"I live at the poor farm," he growled. "Now ye have it!"

But almost at once he put out his hand contritely and laid it upon Joubert's.

"Don't mind me," he said. "I'm an old fool. I say things I don't mean when I get to considering. Sure, and the very pants on me back this night are not me own, and it's a hard thing to consider on, it's cruel hard. The pants belong to the supervisor, and a decent man he is, too, but at me age I should not have to borry any man's pants, bar none!"

"But surely Miss D'Arcy doesn't know of this!" exclaimed Joubert in astonishment.

"Indeed and she do not," snorted the old fellow loyally. "She never answered me letters, and from that I know she never got them. She'll rout me out of that fast enough now, you'll see! She have a good heart, Mister Joubert. She's a little hasty, that's the worst any one can say of her. She would not forget that it took me last dollar and a mortgage on me little place to send her away to be eddicated and made into a fine lady. Not her, thank God! I haven't had sign or word from her in the last three years."

He sighed happily as he watched his daughter.

"It's all over now," he said confidently.

"Look at her now!" he whispered, as Miss D'Arcy cowered beside a black fireplace and waited pitifully to be driven forth into the night and the storm. "See how good-hearted she is! See her weeping and wailing and shedding tears over nothing at all! Would



She answered him between jaunty puffs.
"Well, yes, it was! Jolly old bum, eh?"

a girl like that forget her old father? Indeed and she would not!"

"But she's only acting now," said Joubert feebly.

"Acting, is it?" snorted the old man. "It's little ye know, then, of acting, young man! 'Tis me little Norah in the life that ye're beholding! A little hasty, a little forgetful, but with a noble heart in her, Mister Joubert!"

"She doesn't know that you are here, I suppose," said Joubert. "I'll take you back stage after it's over and we'll surprise her."

"She have a bit of a temper, have Norah," said the old man doubtfully. "We must not surprise her too much."

Joubert checked a laugh. It was a comical remark.

In due time the New England father was struck by lightning, and fell down, keeping his face toward the audience and eyes open to enjoy his histrionic triumph and avoid potatoes. Miss D'Arcy then raised him up, and he talked about the days of innocent childhood when she was a little lass upon his knee. He finally took the rag doll upon his knee and talked to that, calling it litt'e *Dora*, while Miss D'Arcy clung to him and wept. He wept, and the audience wept, and nobody was hindered by the callous grin on the face of the rag doll which had formerly belonged to a ventriloquist and was named *Tommy*.

Miss D'Arcy was sweet and womanly, loving and lovable. She succeeded in putting the breath of life into this ancient piece of buncombe.

Thereafter the villain came back, looked through the window, and saw Miss D'Arcy putting the rag doll to bed. The villain then began to talk to the audience of the innocent days of childhood, and then he entered the house and Miss D'Arcy forgave him, and clung to him and wept. And they were married, and lived happily ever afterward.

"Come on, Mister Darcey," suggested Joubert when the theater was emptying.

He led the old man on to the stage and back to Miss D'Arcy's dressing room. Joubert was well known to the players.

He knocked on the door.

"Just a moment!" cried Miss D'Arcy. "All right—come in!"

"Go ahead," said Joubert.

"Ye will wait for me here?" said Peter Darcey. "Ye'll not leave me to face her alone? She have a temper, have Norah!"

"I'll wait," said Joubert puzzledly.

Peter Darcey cautiously pushed the door of the dressing room open.

"Norah, child," he said in a quavering voice. Then he shut the door behind him.

The voices of father and daughter came to Joubert's ears. He could not catch the words, but he did catch the tones. The old man was pleading, perhaps weeping. And could that hard and level voice be Miss D'Arcy's?

An expression of doubt and bewilderment replaced the sentimental smile on Joubert's face. He put his ear without shame to the thin panel of the door. And gradually his face took on the hard lines of indignation.

The door was thrown open sharply. Miss D'Arcy held it back and spoke to old Peter Darcey.

"Get out!" she ordered. "Quick! I will hear no more from you! How dare you come here and disgrace me in your pauper's rags? From this night on, you are no father of mine! And you shall never darken my door again!"

"Listen, Norah!" begged Peter Darcey.

"Go!" cried Miss D'Arcy inexorably.

And the old man went, head bowed in shame, turning his poor hat about in his hands. He slunk past Joubert and disappeared in the shadows of the flies.

Miss D'Arcy walked back into her

room, leaving the door ajar. Joubert stood in the doorway watching her. She opened a box of cigarettes and snapped one into her mouth. While glancing about for a light she saw Joubert standing on the threshold, pale-faced, with burning eyes.

"Hail, Cæsar!" she exclaimed gayly.

"Was that your father?" he demanded.

She stared at him in dismay. Then she shrugged her shoulders recklessly, and struck fire for her cigarette.

"Well, yes, it was! Jolly old bum, eh?"

There was a chair at the door. Joubert sat down heavily. She leaned over and smiled easily.

"And how did you like me to-night, Cæsar?" she then inquired.

"We won't talk of that now!" he said fiercely.

"Was there something else you wanted to say to me?" she asked softly. "You were interrupted at dinner to-night."

"I asked you to marry me," he said.
"Oh, that!" said Miss D'Arcy, with a laughing sob. And she yielded to his pull on her hands as he drew her close.

P.W.D.

"Miss D'Arcy," he said, "I have done you a grave injustice. You have wonderful talent, approaching genius. Your performance to-night was magnificent, thrilling! Accept my heartiest congratulations. Within a year you will be one



of the stars of the profession. I say it —I, Joubert!"

"Oh!" she cried delightedly. "Then you will perhaps consider me for the part of *Clara* in your new production?"

"It is yours," he said cordially. "The part of *Clara*, the heartless and mercenary adventuress, is yours to create and to adorn! I have been a blind fool. You are the one woman to play it, and it will make you famous. You have the temperament for it, the gift of the gods! We are both to be congratulated."

He rose to leave.

"I find that I must return to New York at once," he said. "I have just time to catch the eleven-twenty train. You will be good enough to make my excuses to Tully? Then I shall expect to see you in New York on the first of the month to begin rehearsals."

"You may expect me," she said.

"Then there's nothing else," he said after a short silence.

"Nothing else?" she prompted. "That is all you have to say to me, Caesar?"

"There is nothing else," he repeated.

He bowed to her and walked from the room.

Miss D'Arcy returned to her dressing-table. She picked up her cigarette, but the jauntiness had gone from her puffing, and she stared soberly at her reflection in the mirror.

"But I did not love him!" argued Miss D'Arcy, leaning toward the reflection entreatingly. "I could not endure such a serious man! He had principles, and think of living with a man of principles—oh, dreadful! Goodness knows, it is hard enough to live with a man at all, without having to live with a set of principles, too! The man I marry must have only one principle: that he loves me. There is simply no use in talking about it, and, besides, I am going to marry somebody else!"

At the last words the reflection lighted up with a tender smile. Some one was knocking.

"Come in!" she called.

Tully stood on the threshold. Behind him was Peter Darcey.

"Hello, dad," said Miss D'Arcy. "Run out into the lobby and wait for me, there's a dear."

"It went over beautifully," she said to Tully. "He was dreadfully shocked, and gave me the part of *Clara* on the spot. The salary will be enough to keep poor daddy out of the poorhouse, where your melodramatic fancy put him. But bother the salary. We start for New York next week!"

"I was sure it would do the trick," said Tully. "There was no other way to convince him. I didn't expect he'd do the obvious thing so quickly, but I knew I could bring him around to it. It was rather drastic treatment, but if we hadn't given it to him, you would never have gotten the part, and Joubert would have groused for months as the victim of a hopeless passion. It was the truest kindness to kill it."

"You explain everything so beautifully," she said. "I am sure you will make a very comfortable husband for somebody. But will you always think up nice excuses for her when she makes you very angry? Will you forget to be strong and wise, and just go on loving her forever and ever?"

She ceased. She seemed somewhat frightened.

"You were telling me about your conception of *Clara*," she said hurriedly. "Last week—— You remember?"

"No," he said firmly. "I have forgotten it entirely. I remember distinctly that I spoke to you of another matter, and that you promised to let me have my answer."

"Was there something else?" she said, turning her head aside.

He caught her hands.

"I asked you to marry me," he said.

"Oh, that!" said Miss D'Arcy, with a laughing sob. And she yielded to his pull on her hands as he drew her close.

SHEILA OF BIG WRECK COVE

BY James A. Cooper



Author of "Tobias o' the Light," "Cap'n Jonah's Fortune," "Cap'n Abe, Storekeeper," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

The author knows well his Cape Cod folks, and in this splendid new story he is at his best. The serial will run, in generous installments, through five numbers of SMITH'S, and then, in book form, will join the ranks of "the best sellers."

CHAPTER I.

SEATED on this sunshiny morning in his old armchair of bent hickory, between his knees a cane on the head of which his gnarled hands rested, Captain Ira Ball was the true retired mariner of the old school. His ruddy face was freshly shaven, his scant, silvery hair well smoothed; everything was neat and trig about him, including his glazed, narrow-brimmed hat, his blue pilot-cloth coat, pleated shirt front as white as snow, heavy silver watch chain festooned upon his waist-coat, and blue-yarn socks showing between the bottom of his full, gray trouser legs and his well-blacked low shoes.

For Cap'n Ira had commanded passenger-carrying craft in his day, and was a bit of a dandy still. The niceties of maritime full dress were as important to his mind now that he had retired from the sea to spend his remaining days in the Ball homestead on Wreckers' Head as when he had trod the quarter-deck of the old *Susan Gatskill*, or had occupied the chief seat at her saloon table.

"I don't know what's to become of us," repeated Cap'n Ira, wagging a thoughtful head, his gaze, as that of old

people often is, fixed upon a point too distant for youthful eyes to see.

"I can't see into the future, Ira, any clearer than you can," rejoined his wife, glancing at his sagging, blue-coated shoulders with some gentle apprehension.

She was a frail, little, old woman, one of those women who, after a robust middle age, seem gradually to shrivel to the figure of what they were in their youth, but with no charm of girlish lines remaining. Her face was wrinkled like a russet apple in February, and it had the colorings of that grateful fruit. She sat on the stone slab which served for a back "door stoop," peeling potatoes.

"I swan, Prue, you cut me in two places this mornin' when you shaved me," said Cap'n Ira suddenly and in some slight exasperation. "And I can't handle that dратted razor myself."

"Maybe you could get John-Ed Williams to come over and shave you, Ira."

"John-Ed's got his work to do. Then again, how're we going to pay him for such jobs? I swan! I can't afford a vally, Prue. Besides, you need help about the house more than I need a steward. I can get along without being

shaved so frequent, I s'pose, but there's times when you can't scurce lift a pot of potatoes off the stove."

"Oh, now, Ira, I ain't so bad as all that!" declared his wife mildly.

"Yes, you be. I am always expecting you to fall down, or hurt yourself some way. And as for looking out for the Queen of Sheby——"

"Now, Ira, Queenie ain't no trouble scurcely."

"Huh! She's more trouble than all our money, that's sure. And she's eating her head off."

"Now, don't say that," urged his wife in that soothing tone which often irritated Cap'n Ira more than it mollified him.

He tapped the metal top of the huge knob of his cane and the spring cover flew open. Ira took a pinch of snuff, inhaled it, closed the cover of the box, delicately brushed a few flecks of the pungent powder from his coat lapel and shirt front, and then, burying his nose in a large silk handkerchief, vented a prodigious:

"A-choon!"

Prudence uttered a surprised squeak, like a mouse being stepped on, jerked herself to a half-standing posture, and the potatoes rolled to every point of the compass.

"Goodness gracious gallop!" she ejaculated, quite shaken out of her usual calm. "I should think, Ira, as many times as I've told you that scares me most into a conniption, that you'd signal me when you're going to take snuff. I—I'm all of a shake, I be."

"I swan! I'm sorry, Prue. I oughter fire a gun, I allow, before speakin' the ship."

"Fire a gun!" repeated the old woman, panting as she scrambled for the potatoes. "That's what I object to, Ira. You want to speak *this* ship 'fore you shoot that awful noise. I never can get used to it."

"There, there!" he said, trying to poke the more distant potatoes toward her with his cane. He could not himself stoop; or, if he did, he could only sit erect again after the method of a ratchet wheel. "I won't do so again, Prudence. I be an onthoughtful critter, if ever there was one."

Prudence had recovered the last potato. She stopped to pat his ruddy cheek, nor was it much wrinkled, before she returned to peeling the potatoes.

"I know you don't mean to, Iry," she crooned. Married couples like the Balls, where the man has been at home only for brief visits between voyages, if they really love each other, never grow



weary of the little frills on connubial bliss usually worn shabby by other people before the honeymoon is past. "I know you don't mean to. But when you sneeze I think it's the crack o' doom."

"I'm sorry about them potatoes," repeated Cap'n Ira. "I make you a lot of extra work, Prue. Sometimes I feel, fixed as I be in health, I oughter be in the Sailors' Snug Harbor over to Paulmouth. I do, for a fact."

"And what would become of me?" cried the old woman, appalled.

"Well," returned Cap'n Ira, "you

couldn't be no worse off than you be. We'd miss each other a heap, I know."

"Ira!" cried his wife. "Ira, I'd just die without you now that I've got you to myself at last. Those long years you were away so much, and us not being blessed with children——"

Ira Ball made a sudden clucking sound with his tongue. That was a sore topic of conversation, and he always tried to dodge it.

"It did seem sometimes," pursued Prudence, wiping her eyes with a bit of a handkerchief that she took from her bosom, "as though I wasn't an honestly



"Why, what schooner is it?" asked Prudence. "I never saw her before, did I? She's bearing in for the cove."

married woman. I know that sounds awful"—and she shook her head—"but it was so, you only getting home as you did between voyages. But I was always looking forward to the time when you would be home for good."

"Don't you s'pose I looked forward to casting anchor?" he demanded warmly. "Seemed like the time never would come. I was always trying to speculate a little so as to make something besides my skipper's pay and share. That—that's why I got bit in that Sea-Gold proposition. That feller's prospectus did read mighty reasonable, Prudence."

"I know it did, Ira," she agreed cordially. "I believed in it just as strong as you did. You warn't none to blame."

"Well, I dunno. It's mighty nice of you to say so, Prue. But they told me afterward that I might have knowned that a feller couldn't extract ten dollars' wuth of gold from the whole Atlantic Ocean, not if he bailed it dry!"

"We've got enough left to keep us, Ira."

"Just about. Just about. That is just it. When I was taken down with this rheumatiz and the hospital doctors in New York told me I could never think of pacing my own quarter no more, we had just enough left invested in good securities for us to live on the int'rest."

"And the old place, here, Ira," added his wife cheerfully.

"Which ain't much more than a shelter," he rejoined rather bitterly. "And just as I say, it isn't fit for two old folks like us to live alone in. Why, we can't even raise our own potatoes no more. And I never yet heard of pollack swimmin' ashore and beggin' to be split and dried against winter. No, sir!"

"The Lord's been good to us, Ira. We ain't never suffered yet," she told him softly.

"I know that. We ain't suffering for food and shelter. But, I swan,

Prue, we be suffering for some young person about the house. Now, hold on! 'Twarn't for us to have children. That warn't meant. We've been all through that, and it's settled. But that don't change the fact that we need somebody to live with us if we're going to live comfortable."

"Oh, dear, if my niece Sarah had lived! She used to stay with me when she was a gal and you was away," sighed Prudence.

"But she married and had a gal of her own. She brought her here that time I was home after my first v'yge on the *Susan Gatskill*. A pretty baby if ever there was one."

"Ida May Bostwick! Bostwick was Sarah's married name. I heard something about Ida May only the other day."

"You did?" exclaimed Cap'n Ira, much interested.

"Yes, Ira. Annabell Coffin, she who was a Cuttle, was visiting his folks in Boston, and she learned that Sarah Bostwick's daughter was working behind the counter in some store there. She has to work for her livin', poor child."

"I swan!" ejaculated the captain.

Much as he had been about the world, Cap'n Ira looked upon most mundane affairs with the eyes of the true Cape man. Independence is bred in the bone of his tribe. A tradesman or store-keeper is, after all, not of the shipmaster caste. And a clerk, working "behind the counter" of any store, is much like a man before the mast.

"It does seem too bad," sighed Prudence. "She was a pretty baby, as you say, Ira."

"Sarah was nice as she could be to you," was the old man's thoughtful comment.

"Yes. But her husband, Bostwick, was only a mechanic. Of course, he left nothing. Them city folks are so improvident," said Prudence. "I wish't

we was able to do something for little Ida May, Ira. Think of her workin' behind a counter!"

"I am a-thinkin'," growled the old captain. "See here, Prue. What's to hinder us doin' something for her?"

Prudence looked at him, startled.

"Why, Iry, you say yourself we can scurse help ourselves."

"It's a mighty ill wind that don't blow fair for some craft," declared the ancient mariner, nodding. "We do need help right here, Prudence, and that gal of Sarah Bostwick's could certainly fill the bill. On the other hand, she'd be a sight better off here on the Cape, living with us, getting rosy and healthy, and having this old place and what we've got left when we die, than she would be slavin' behind a counter in any city store. What d'you think?"

"Ira!" exclaimed his wife, clasping her hands, potato knife and all. "Ira! I think that's a most wonderful idea. It takes you to think up things. You're just wonderful!"

Cap'n Ira preened himself like the proud old gander he was. He heaved himself out of the chair by the aid of his cane, a present from one grateful group of passengers that had sailed in his charge on the *Susan Gatskill*.

"Well, well!" he said. "Let's think of it. Let's see, where's my glass? Here 'tis."

He seized the old-fashioned collapsible spyglass, which he favored rather than the newer binoculars, and started off to "pace the quarter," as he called the path from the back door to the grassy cart track which joined the road at the lower corner of the Ball premises. This highway wandered down from the Head into the fishing village along the inner beach of Big Wreck Cove. Prudence watched Ira with fond but comprehending eyes. She saw how broken he was, how stumbling his feet when he first started off, and the swaying locomotion that betrayed that feebleness of both

brain and body that can never be denied.

"Poor Ira! Poor Ira!" she repeated inaudibly. "He's fast breaking up. He's just worked himself pretty near to death, and for what?"

She let her gaze rove dully about the dooryard and the kitchen garden which lay between it and the road that branched toward the shallow, saucerlike valley behind Wreckers' Head.

Somewhere on the Head in the old days the wreckers had kept their outlook for ships in distress. Those harpies of the coast had fattened on the bones of storm-racked craft. It was one of those battered freighters that, nearly two centuries before, had been driven into the cove itself, to become embalmed in Cape history as "the big wreck."

The Balls and the Lathams, the Honeys and the Coffins of that ancient day had "wracked" the stranded craft most thoroughly. But they had not overlooked the salvation of her ship's company of foreigners. She had been a Portuguese vessel, and although the Cape Codder, then; as now, was opposed to "foreigners," refuge was extended to the people saved from the big wreck.

Near the straggling settlement at the cove a group of shacks had sprung up to shelter the "Portygees" from the stranded vessel. As her bones were slowly engulfed in the marching sands, through the decades that passed, the people who had come ashore from the big wreck had waxed well to do, bred families of strong, handsome, brown men and black-eyed, glossy-haired women who flashed their white teeth in smiles that were almost startling. Now one end of "the port," as the village of Big Wreck Cove was usually called by the natives, was known as Portygee Town.

Wreckers' Head boasted of several homes of retired shipmasters and owners of Cap'n Ira's ilk. These ancient

sea dogs, on such a day as this, were unfailingly found "walking the poop" of their front yards, or wherever they could take their diurnal exercise, binoculars or spyglass in hand, their vision more often fixed seaward than on the land.

Cap'n Ira had scarcely put the glass to his eye for a first squint at his "position" when he exclaimed:

"I swan! That's a master-pretty sight. I ain't seen a prettier in many a day. Come here and look at this craft, Prudence."

She hurried to join him. Her motions when she was on her feet were birdlike, yet there was the same unsteadiness in her walk as in Cap'n Ira's. Only, at the moment, he did not see it, for his eye was glued to the telescope.

"What do you see, Ira?" she asked.

"Clap this glass to your eye," said her husband. He steadied the telescope, having pointed it for her. "See that suit of sails? Ain't they grand? And the taper of them masts? She's a bird!"

"Why, what schooner is it?" asked Prudence. "I never saw her before, did I? She's bearing in for the cove."

"I cal'late she is," agreed Cap'n Ira. "And I cal'late by the newness of that suit of sails and her lines and all that she's Tunis Latham's new craft that he went up to Marblehead last week to bring down here and put into commission."

"The *Seamew!*" cried Prudence, in a pleased voice. "Isn't she a pretty sight?"

"She's a sightly craft. Looks more like a racing yacht than a cargo boat. Still and all, Tunis has got judgment. And he's put nigh every cent he's got, all Peke Latham left him, into this schooner. And she not new."

"I hope Tunis has made no mistake," sighed Prudence, releasing the glass for Ira to look through once more. "There has been trouble enough over Peleg Latham's money."

"More trouble than the money amounted to. Split the family wide open. 'Rion Latham was saying to me he believed Peke never meant the money should go all one way. The Medway Lathams, them 'Rion belongs to, is all as sore as carbuncles about Tunis getting it. But I tell Tunis as long as the court says the money should be his, let 'Rion and all them yap like the hungry dogs they be. Tunis has got the marrer bone."

"Does seem a pity," the old woman said, still watching the white splotch against the background of gray and blue. "Families ought to be at peace."

"Peace! I swan!" snorted Cap'n Ira. "'Rion Latham is about as much given to peace as a wild tagger. But he knows which half of his biscuit's buttered. He'll sail with Tunis as long as Tunis pays him wages."

The captain continued to study the approaching schooner while Prudence went back to her household tasks.

CHAPTER II.

Tunis Latham's *Seamew*, tacking for the channel into Big Wreck Cove, wings full-spread, skimming the heaving blue of the summer sea, looked like a huge member of the tern family. From Wreckers' Head and the other sand bluffs guarding this roadstead from the heave of the Atlantic rollers, the schooner with her yachtlike lines was truly a picture to please the most exacting mariner.

On her deck paced the young captain whose personal affairs had been a subject of comment between Cap'n Ira Ball and his wife. He was a heavy-set, upstanding, blue-jerseyed figure, lithe and as spry on his feet as a cat. Tunis Latham was thirty, handsome in the bold way of longshore men, and ruddy-faced. He had crisp, short, sandy hair; his cheeks, chin, and lip were scraped as clean as his palm; his eyes were like



The hobbling old man and the hobbling old mare, making their way across the bare lot, made
as drab a picture in the early morning as a Millet. There was no other
sign of life upon Wreckers' Head.

blue-steel points, but with humorous wrinkles at the outer corners of them, matched by a faint smile that almost always wreathed his lips. Altogether he was a man that a woman would be sure to look at twice.

The revelation of the lighter traits of his character counteracted the otherwise sober look of Tunis Latham. His sternness and fitness to command were revealed at first glance; his softer attributes dawned upon one later.

As he swayed back and forth across the deck of the flying *Seamew*, rolling easily in sailor gait to the pitching of the schooner, his sharp glance cast astern and then aloft betrayed the keen perception and attentive mind of the master mariner, while his surface appearance merely suggested a young man pridefully enjoying the novelty of pacing the deck of his first command. For this was the maiden trip of the *Seamew* under this name and commanded by this master.

She was not a new vessel, but neither was she old. At least, her decks were not marred, her rails were ungashed with the wear of lines, and even her fenders were almost shop-new. Of course, any craft may have a fresh suit of sails; and new paint and gilding on the figurehead or a new name board under the stern do not bespeak a craft just off the builder's ways. Yet there was an appearance about the schooner-yacht which would assure any able seaman at first glance that she was still to be sea-tried. She was like a maiden at her first dance, just venturing out upon the floor.

An old salt hung to the *Seamew's* wheel as the bonny craft sped channel-ward. Horace Newbegin was a veritable sea dog. He had sailed every navigable sea in all this watery world, and sailed in almost every conceivable sort of craft. And he had sailed many voyages under Tunis Latham's father, who had owned and commanded the

four-master *Ada May*, which, ill-freighted and ill-fated at last, had struck and sunk on the outer Hebrides, carrying to the bottom most of the hands as well as the commander of the partially insured ship.

This misfortune had kept Tunis Latham out of a command of his own until he was thirty; for Cape Cod boys that come of masters' families and are born navigators usually tread their own decks years before the age at which Tunis was pacing that of the *Seamew* on this summer day.

"How does she handle now, Horry?" asked the skipper, wheeling suddenly to face the old steersman.

"Thar's still that tug to sta'bo'd, Captain Tunis," growled the old man.

"But you keep her full on her course."

"Spite o' that? In course. But I can feel her tuggin' like a big bluefish trying to bolt with hook and sinker. Never did feel that same tug to sta'bo'd but once before on any craft. I told you that."

Tunis Latham nodded. The old man's keen eyes tried to read the skipper's face. He could scan the signs in sea and sky at a glance, but he confessed that the captain of the *Seamew* revealed no more of his inner thoughts than had the mahogany countenance of the older Captain Latham with whom Horry Newbegin had so long sailed.

"Well," the steersman said finally, "I've told ye all I can tell ye. That other schooner that had a tug to sta'bo'd like this, the *Marlin B.*, got a bad name from the Georges to Monomoy P'int. You know that."

"Cat's foot!" ejaculated Tunis cheerfully. "The *Marlin B.* was sold for a pleasure yacht and taken half around the world. A Chilean guano millionaire bought her the year after the Sutro Brothers took her off the Banks."

"Ye-as. That's what Sutro Brothers says," and the old man wagged his head

doubtfully. "But there's just as much difference in ships as there is in men. Ain't never been two men just *per-zact-ly* alike. No two craft ever sailed or steered same as same, Captain Tunis. I steered the *Marlin B.* out o' Salem on her second trip, without knowing what she'd been through, you can believe, on her first."

"Well, well!" Tunis broke in sharply. "Just keep your mind on what you are doing now, Horry. You're supposed to be steering the *Seamew* into Big Wreck Cove. Don't undertake to shave a piece off the Lighthouse Point reef."

The steersman did not answer. From long experience with these Lathams, Horace Newbegin knew just how much interference or advice they would stand.

"And, by gum, that ain't much!" he growled to himself.

He took the beautifully sailing schooner in through the channel in a masterly manner. He knew that more ancient skippers than Cap'n Ira Ball, up there on Wreckers' Head, would be watching the *Seamew* make the cove, and old Horry Newbegin wanted them to say it was well done.

Half an hour later the anchor was dropped fifty yards off Portygee Town. Captain Tunis ordered the gig lowered to take him ashore and, after giving the mate some instructions regarding stowage and the men's shore leave, he was rowed over to Luiz Wharf. 'Rion Latham, a red-headed, pimply faced young man, sidled up to Horace Newbegin.

"Well, what do you think of the hoodoo ship, Horrors?" he hoarsely whispered.

Newbegin stared at him unwaveringly, and the red-haired one repeated the question. The old salt finally bat-ted one eye, slowly and impressively.

"D'you know what answer the little boy got that asked the quahog the time o' day?" he drawled. "Not a word. Not a derned word, 'Rion."

Landing at the fish wharf, Tunis Latham walked up the straggling street of the district inhabited for the most part by smiling brown men and women. Fayal and Cape Cod are strangely analogous, especially upon a summer's day. The houses he passed had one room; they were little more than shacks. But there were gay colors everywhere in the dress of both men and women. It was believed that these Portygee fishermen would have their seines dyed red and yellow if the fish would swim into them.

A young woman sitting upon a doorstep, nursing a little, bald, brown-headed baby, dropped a gay handkerchief over her bared bosom but nodded and smiled at the captain of the *Seamew* with right good fellowship. He knew all these people, and most of them, the young women at least, admired Tunis; but he was too self-centered and busied with his own thoughts and affairs to comprehend this.

At the corner of one of the houses a girl stood—a tall, lean-flanked, but deepbosomed creature, as graceful as a well-grown sapling. Her calico frock clung to the lines of her matured figure as though she had just stepped up out of the sea itself. Around her head she had banded a crimson bandanna, but it allowed the escape of glossy black hair that waved prettily. Her lips were as red as poppies, full, voluptuous; her eyes were sloe-black and as soft as a cow's. Fortunately for the languishing girl's peace of mind—she had placed herself there at the corner of the house to wait for Tunis since the moment the *Seamew* had dropped anchor—she did not know that the young captain had noticed her only as "that cow" as he swung by on his way to the road that wound up the slope of Wreckers' Head.

Neither Eunez Pareta—nor any other girl of the port, Portygee or Yankee—had ever made Tunis Latham's heart flutter. He was not impervious to the blandishments of all feminine

beauty. As Cap'n Ira Ball would have said, Tunis was "a general admirer of the sect." And as the young man passed the languishing Eunez with a cheerful nod and smile there flashed into his memory an entirely different picture, but one of a girl nevertheless. Somehow the memory of that girl in Scollay Square kept coming back to his mind.

He had gone up by train for the *Seamew* and her crew, and naturally he had spent one night in Boston. Coming up out of the North End after a late supper, he had stopped upon one side of the square to watch the passing throng, some hurrying home from work, some hurrying to theaters and other places of amusement, but all hurrying. Nowhere did he see the slow, but carrying, stride of a man used to open spaces. And the narrow-skirted girls could scarcely hobble.

A narrow skirt, however, had not led Tunis Latham to give particular note to one certain girl in the throng. She had stepped through the door of a cheap but garish restaurant. Somebody had thrown a peeling on the sidewalk, and she had slipped on it. Tunis had leaped and caught her before she measured her length. She looked up into his face with startled, violet eyes that seemed, in that one moment, to hold in them a fascination and power that the Cape man had never dreamed a woman's eyes could possess.

"You're all right, ma'am," he said, confused, setting her firmly on her feet.

"My skirt!" She almost whispered it. There seemed to be not a shyness, but a terrified timidity in her voice and manner. Tunis saw that the shabby skirt was torn widely at the hem.

"Let's go somewhere and get that fixed," he suggested awkwardly.

"Thank you, sir. I will go back into the restaurant. I work there. I can get a pin or two."

He had to let her go, of course. Nor

could he follow her. He lacked the boldness that might have led another man to enter the restaurant and order something to eat for the sake of seeing what became of the girl with the violet eyes and colorless velvet cheeks. There had been an appeal in her countenance that called Tunis more and more as he dreamed about her.

And standing there on Scollay Square dreaming about her had done the young captain of the *Seamew* positively no good! She did not come out again, although he stood there for fully an hour. At the end of that time he strolled up an alley and discovered that there was a side door to the restaurant for the use of employees, and he judged that the girl, seeing him lingering in front, had gone out by this way. It made him flush to his ears when he thought of it. Of course, he had been rude.

Marching up the winding road by the Ball homestead, Tunis Latham revised this adventure—and the violet-eyed girl. Well, he probably would never see her again. And in any case she was not the sort of girl that he would ever take home to Aunt Lucretia. He was headed toward home now, to the old brown house in the saucer-like valley some distance beyond Cap'n Ira's.

As he came within hail of the old homestead in which the Balls had been born and had died—if they were not lost at sea—for many generations, the captain of the *Seamew* became suddenly aware that something was particularly wrong there. He heard somebody shouting. Was it for help? He hastened his stride.

Quite unexpectedly the hobbling figure of Cap'n Ira appeared in the open barn door. He saw Tunis. He waved his cane in one hand and beckoned wildly with the other. Then he disappeared.

The young captain vaulted the fence and ran across the ill-tended garden ad-

joining the Balls side yard. Again he heard Cap'n Ira's hail.

"Come on in here, Tunis!"

"What's the matter, Cap'n Ira?"

"That dratted Queen of Sheby! I knew she'd be the death of one of us some day. I swan! Tunis Latham, come here! I can't get her out, and you know derned well Prudence can't stand on her head that a way without strangling. Lend us a hand, boy. This is something awful! Something awful!"

Tunis Latham, much disturbed by the old man's words and excited manner, pushed into the dimly lit interior of the barn.

CHAPTER III.

The barn was a roomy place, as well built as the Ball house itself, and quite as old. The wagon floor had a wide door, front and rear. The stables were on either side of this floor and the mows were above. In one mow was a small quantity of hay and some corn fodder, but the upper reaches were filled only with a brown dusk.

The pale face of a gray mare was visible at the opening over one of the mangers. She was the sole recognized occupant of the stable. In a dark corner Tunis Latham saw a huge grain box, for once the Ball farm had supported several span of oxen and a considerable dairy herd, its cover raised and its maw gaping wide. There was something moving there in the murk, something fluttering.

"Come here, boy!" gasped Cap'n Ira, hurrying across the barn floor. "I'm so crippled I can't git her up, and she's dove clean to the lower hold, tryin' to scrape out a capful o' oats for that dratted Queen of Sheby."

"Aunt Prue!" shouted Tunis, reverting to the title he had addressed her by in his boyhood. "It's never her?"

A muffled voice stammered:

"Get me out! Get me out!"

"Heave hard, Tunis! All together now!" gasped Cap'n Ira, as the younger man reached over the old woman's struggling heels and seized her around the waist.

"Up she comes!" continued the excited old man, as though he were bossing a captain crew starting one of the *Susan Gatskill's* anchors.

Tunis Latham set Prudence Ball on her feet, but the old woman was forced to lean against the stalwart young man for a minute. She addressed her husband in some heat.

"Goodness gracious gallop! Why don't you sing a chantey over me, I want to know? You'd think I was a bale of jute being snaked out of a ship's hold. Good land!"

"There, there, Prudence!" exclaimed Cap'n Ira. "You're safe, after all! It—it was something awful!"

"I cal'late it was," rejoined the old woman rather bitterly. "And I didn't get them oats, after all."

"I'll 'tend to all that, Aunt Prue," said Tunis.

"If it hadn't been for that dratted Queen of Sheby"—Cap'n Ira glared malevolently at the rather surprised-looking countenance of the gray mare in her box—"you wouldn't have got into that jam."

"If it hadn't been for you taking that dose of snuff when I was expecting nothing of the kind, I wouldn't have dove into that feed box, Ira, and you know it very well."

"I swan!" admitted her husband in a feeble voice. "I forgot again, didn't I?"

"I don't know as you forgot, but I know you mighty near sneezed your head off. You'll be the death of me some day, Ira, blowin' up that way. I wonder I didn't jump clean through the bottom of that feed box when I was just reaching down to get a measure of oats."

"Aunt Prue," Tunis interposed,



She had placed herself there at the corner of the house to wait for Tunis.

"why do you keep the little tad of feed you have to buy for Queenie in this big old chest?"

"There!" Cap'n Ira hastened to rejoin, glad likewise to turn the trend of conversation. "That's all that dratted boy's doings, little John-Ed Williams. Who else would have ever thought of dumping a two-bushel bag of oats into a twenty-bushel bin? We

Cecilia Rose

always put feed in that covered can yonder, so as to keep shet of the rats. But that boy, when he brought the oats, dumped 'em into the box before I could stop him. He's got less sense than his father; and you know, Tunis, John-Ed himself ain't got much more wit than the law allows."

"But if you hadn't sneezed——" began Prudence again.

"You take her into the house, Cap'n Ira," said Tunis. "I'll feed Queenie. What do you give her—this measure full of oats? And a hank of that hay?"

"And a bunch of fodder. Might as well give her a dinner while you're

about it," grumbled the old man, leading his tottering wife toward the door. "As I say, that old critter is eatin' her head off."

"Well, she long ago earned her keep in her old age," Tunis said, laughing.

He could remember when the Queen of Sheba had come to the Ball barn as a colt. Many a clandestine bareback ride had he enjoyed. He fed the mare and petted her as if she were his own. Then he scraped the oats out of the bin and poured them into the galvanized-iron can, so that Cap'n Ira could more easily get at the mare's feed.

He went to the house afterward to see if there was any other little chore he could do for the old couple before going on to his own home.

"You can't do much for us, Tunis, unless you can furnish me a new pair of legs," said Cap'n Ira. "I might as well have timber ones as these I've got. What Prue and me needs is what you've got but can't give away—youth."

"You ought to have somebody living with you to help, Cap'n Ira," said the young man.

"I cal'late," said the other dryly, "that we've already made that discovery, Tunis. Trouble is, we ain't fixed right to increase the pay roll. I'd like to know who you'd think would want to sign up on this craft that even the rats have deserted?"

"Never mind, Ira. Don't be down-hearted," Prudence said, now recovered from her excitement. "Perhaps the Lord has something good in store for us."

Cap'n Ira pursed his lips.

"I ain't doubting the Lord's stores is plentiful," he returned rather irreverently. "The trouble is for us poor mortals to get at 'em. Well, Tunis, I certainly am obliged to you."

The flurry of excitement was over. But Ira Ball was a determined man. It was in his mind that the trouble of taking care of the old mare was too great

for Prudence, and he could not do the barn chores himself. They really had no use for the gray mare, for nowadays the neighbors did all their errands in town for them, and the few remaining acres of the old farm lay fallow.

Nor, had he desired to sell the mare, would anybody be willing to pay much for the twenty-two-year-old Queenie. In truth, Ira Ball was too tender-hearted to think of giving the Queen of Sheba over to a new owner and so sentence her to painful toil.

"She'd be a sight better off in the horse heaven, wherever that is," he decided. But he was careful to say nothing like this in his wife's hearing. "Women are funny that way," he considered. "She'd rather let the decrepit old critter hang around eatin' her head off, like I say, than mercifully put her out of her misery."

Stern times call for stern methods. Cap'n Ira Ball had seen the tragic moment when he was forced to separate a bridegroom from his bride with a sinking deck all but awash under his feet. What had to be done had to be done! Prudence could no longer be endangered by the stable tasks connected with the old mare. He could not relieve her. They could scarcely afford a hired hand merely to take care of Queenie.

He remained rather silent that evening, and even forgot to praise Prue's hot biscuit, of which he ate a good many with his creamed pollack. The sweet-tempered old woman chatted as she knitted on his blue-wool hose, but she scarcely expected more than his occasional grunted acknowledgment that he was listening. She always said it was "a joy to have somebody besides the cat around to talk to." The loneliness of shipmasters who sail the seven seas is often mentioned in song and in story; the loneliness of their wives at home is not usually marked.

They went to bed. Old men do not

usually sleep much after second cockcrow; and it was not far from three in the morning when Cap'n Ira awoke. Like most mariners, he was wide awake when he opened his eyes. He lay quietly for several moments in the broad bed he occupied alone. The half-sobbing breathing of the old woman sounded from her room, through the open door.

"It's got to be done," Cap'n Ira almost audibly repeated.

He got out of the bed with care. It was both a difficult and a painful task to dress. When he had on all but his boots and hat he tiptoed to a green sea chest in the corner, unlocked it, and from beneath certain tarpaulins and other sea rubbish drew out something which he examined carefully in the semidarkness of the chamber. He finally tucked this into an inner pocket of the double-breasted pilot coat he wore. It sagged the coat a good deal on that side.

He crept out of the chamber, crossed the sitting room, and went into the ell-kitchen with his shoes in his hand. When he opened the back door he faced the west, but even the sky at that point of the compass showed the glow of the false dawn. Down in the cove the night mist wrapped the shipping about in an almost opaque veil. Only the lofty tops of craft like the *Seamew* were visible, black streaks against the mother-of-pearl sky line.

The captain closed the kitchen door softly behind him. He sat down on a bench and painfully pulled on his shoes and laced them. When he tried to straighten up it was by a method which he termed, "easy, by jerks." He sat and recovered his breath after the effort.

Then, taking his cane, he hobbled off to the barn. The big doors were open, for it had been a warm night. The pungent odor from Queenie's stall made his nostrils wrinkle. He stumbled in, and the pale face of the old mare ap-

peared at the opening above her manager. She snorted her surprise.

"You'll snort more'n that afore I'm done with you," Cap'n Ira said, trying to seem embittered.

But when he unknotted the halter and backed her out of the stable, quite involuntarily he ran a tender hand down her sleek neck. He sighed as he led her out of the rear door.

The old mare hung back, stretching first one hind leg and then the other as old horses do when first they come from the stall in the morning.

"Come on, you old nuisance!" exploded Cap'n Ira under his breath, giving an impatient tug at the rope.

He did not look around at her, but set his face sternly toward the distant lot which had once been known as the east meadow. It was no longer in grass. Wild carrots sprang from its acidulous soil. The herbage would scarcely have nourished sheep. There were patches of that gray moss which blossoms with a tiny red flower, and there was mullein and sour grass. Altogether the rundown condition of the soil could not be mistaken by even the casual eye.

The hobbling old man and the hobbling old mare, making their way across the bare lot, made as drab a picture in the early morning as a Millet. At a distance their moving shapes would have seemed like shadows only. There was no other sign of life upon Wreckers' Head.

A light but keen and salty breath blew in from the sea. Cap'n Ira faced this breeze with twitching nostrils. The old mare's lower lip hung down in depression. She groaned. She did not care to be led out of her comfortable stall at this unconscionably early hour.

"Grunt, you old nuisance!" muttered Cap'n Ira bitterly. "You don't even know what a dratted, useless thing you be, I swan!"

There was a depression in the field. When the heavy spring and fall rains

came the water ran down into this sink and stood, sometimes a foot or two deep over several acres. In some past time of heavy flood the water had washed out to the edge of the highland overlooking the ocean beach. There it had crumbled the brink of the Head away, the water gullying year after year a deeper and broader channel, until now the slanting gutter began a hundred yards back from the brink.

The recurrent downpours, aided by occasional landslips, had made a slanting trough to the beach itself, which was all of two hundred feet below the brink of Wreckers' Head. Many such water-worn gullies are to be found along the face of the Cape headlands, up which the fishermen and seaweed gatherers freight their cargoes from the shore. There was no wheel track here; merely a trough of sliding sand, treacherous under foot and almost continuously in motion. As the gully progressed seaward, the banks on either hand became more than forty feet high, the trough itself being scarcely half as wide.

Determinedly Cap'n Ira led the old mare into and down the slope of this gully.

It was steep. He went ahead haltingly, trying to steady his footsteps with the cane, which sank deeply into the sand, making orifices which, in the pale light of the dawn, seemed to starle the mare. She held back, scuffling and snorting.

"Come on, drat ye!" adjured the captain. "You needn't blow your nose. You ain't been taking snuff."

The sand was so light and dry that it seemed to be on the move all about them. There was a stealthy sound to the whispering particles, too, as though they breathed, "Hush! Hush-sh-sh!" The old man was made nervous by it. He began to glance back over his shoulder at the faintly objecting mare. When Queenie slipped a little and scrambled

in the unstable sand he uttered such an exclamation as might have been wrung from him at time of stress upon his quarter-deck.

"I swan! I'd rather be keelhauled than do this," burst from his lips finally.

But they were well into the gully now. The walls on either hand towered far above their heads. He halted, and the mare stood still, again blowing softly through her nostrils.

The old man, with shaking hands, took from under his coat the heavy article that had sagged his pocket. It was a black, old-fashioned, seven-chambered revolver, well oiled and as grim-looking as a rifled cannon on a battleship. He produced three greased cartridges, broke the weapon, inserted the cartridges, then closed it and spun the cylinder. It was not an unfamiliar weapon, this. Its mere grim appearance, stuck into Cap'n Ira's waistband, had once quelled mutiny aboard the *Susan Gatskill*.

While he was thus engaged he had not even glanced around at the old mare. Suddenly he felt a touch upon his shoulder, then upon the sleeve of his coat. He felt a creepy chill the length of his spine. It seemed as if the hand of Prudence had been laid softly upon him.

"I swan!" he gulped, shaking himself. "I'm as flighty as a gal. What th'——" He looked back. Queenie was nuzzling his arm questioningly. Her ears were cocked forward; her surprised face was almost ridiculously human in its expression.

Cap'n Ira groaned again. He shuddered. But his gnarled hand gripped the hard-rubber butt of the revolver with the desperation of the deed he had screwed his courage to do. Better the old mare should be put out of the way than that she should fall into hands that would misuse her. And he feared what other accident might happen if Prudence continued to take care of the animal.

"I swan! It's a wrench," admitted Cap'n Ira, swerving to point the muzzle of the revolver at the gray mare.

He looked all about again. Yes, the position was right. If she fell here, a man with a shovel could easily pry down tons of sand from either bank upon her in a few minutes. The burial might be done by himself without any other soul knowing what had become of Queenie.

He cocked the old revolver.

Suddenly the Queen of Sheba gave a snort of alarm. She looked back over her withers. The light in the cut between the sand banks was dim. Was somebody coming?

To tell the truth, Cap'n Ira had a vision of Prudence, having missed him, getting out of her bed and traveling down through the lots after him and the old mare. The idea shook him to his marrow, or was it the weight of the heavy weapon that made his hand so unsteady?

"I swan!" His oft-repeated ejaculation was almost a prayer.

At the moment he felt the sand giving under his feet. The old mare uttered again her terrified snort. He saw dimly the path behind them moving—a swift, serpentlike slide. Heavy as the mare was, she felt the landslip, too.

Cap'n Ira was not a man who easily lost his self-possession. He had been through too much to show the white flag when danger menaced. He realized that peril threatened now.

He turned squarely about and, cocked pistol in one hand and huge-knobbed cane in the other, he started away from the spot at a cripple's gallop. The whole trough of the gully of sand seemed to be in motion. Behind him the old mare scrambled and whistled with fear, quite as unable to keep her feet as was the captain.

For, before he had gone far, Cap'n Ira found himself seated on the moving plane of sand. He glanced fear-

fully behind him. The Queen of Sheba was seated on her tail, her forefeet braced against nothing more stable than the avalanche itself, and she was sailing down the slope behind him like a winged Pegasus!

"My soul and body!" ejaculated Cap'n Ira. "We're certainly on our way."

CHAPTER IV.

The Latham house stood in the middle of the shallow valley behind Wreckers' Head. The fields surrounding it were arable and well kept. The house was not as old as the Ball house and was of an entirely different style of architecture. Whereas the Ball house was low-roofed and sprawling, squatting like a huge and ugly toad on the gale-swept Head, the house Tunis Latham's grandfather had built was three-story, including the mansard roof, painted a tobacco brown, and it was surrounded by wry-limbed cedars which could grow here because they were sheltered from the gales.

It was a gloomy-looking house even in midsummer, standing like a grim figure menaced by the tortured limbs of the trees surrounding it, stark and alone. No other human habitation was in view from its site. The Latham who had built the twelve-room house had built on hope. He desired and expected to fill the great house with a breed of Lathams that would do honor to the Cape on sea and on land. But his young wife had died the next year, after giving birth to her second child.

Tunis Latham's father, Randall Latham, had been the elder Latham's sole hope of perpetuating the family name and filling the big, ugly brown house behind Wreckers' Head with tow-headed little Lathams, for the other child was a girl.

It was said that Medford Latham had seldom spoken to or of his daughter, Lucretia. She must have led a very

lonely and repressed life while she was a little girl. Medford Latham did not go to sea, for he had business that kept him on shore.

Medford Latham lived long enough to see Randall grow up, walk his own quarter-deck, and marry a maiden from the port who promised to be able to fulfill his hopes of a flourishing houseful of children. She bore Tunis while young Captain Randall Latham was away, and he came back in time to christen the boy with the name of the most colorful city he had touched on the trip, not an uncommon practice of seagoing fathers on the Cape. But Mrs. Randall Latham, watching her husband's ship bear off to seaward in the face of a keen gale, caught a severe cold, and when Captain Randall returned the next time he came not to a cradle in the great living room of the big, brown house, but to an already-sodden grave in the family plot on the west side of the saucerlike valley.

Lucretia Latham had grown to be a tall, large-boned, silent, and quick-stepping woman—a woman of understanding and infinite tenderness, although this tenderness was exhibited in deeds, not words.

The big, quiet-faced woman, who had never had a lover and on whom no man had ever looked with admiration, seemed to the casual observer cold and uncompromising. She might speak to the dog, call the fowls to their meals, but she never otherwise spoke unless she was forced to. When he was little, Tunis had found in her arms and against her breast a refuge from all hurt and fear, but it was a wordless comfort Aunt Lucretia gave him.

When he walked over from the cove that afternoon, after seeing the anchor of the *Seamew* overside for the first time in this roadstead, Tunis found his Aunt Lucretia much as usual. She watched him approach from the side porch, a warm smile of greeting on her

rather gaunt face. He knew that she must have watched the *Seamew* skim by, making for the channel into the cove; for he had written her when to expect him. But she would say nothing about it unless he forced the gates of her silence by some direct question which demanded more than a "yes" or a "no."

Lucretia folded him in her arms, however, and patted his broad shoulder with little love pats as he put his arms about her. Her kiss for him was as warm on his lips as a girl's. They understood each other pretty well, these two; for Tunis had caught something of her muteness, living so long alone with her.

He went to wash and change his shirt. Then he sat down in one of the huge porch chairs and rocked quietly, waiting for supper. He could see into the kitchen, which was the family dining room as well, and when he saw his Aunt Lucretia take the coffeepot from the stove and put it on the square Dutch tile by her own place, Tunis knew it was the only call to supper there would be.

He rose and went in, taking his place at the head of the table. His aunt's head was bowed and her lips moved soundlessly. He respected her whispered grace and always felt that he could add nothing to it in thankfulness or reverence if he uttered an orison himself. During the cheerful and plentiful meal the young captain of the *Seamew* related certain matters he thought would interest the woman regarding his purchase of the schooner and the voyage down to the Cape. He told her he was sure the *Seamew* was fast enough for a Boston market boat.

"Speed is what is wanted now to compete with the Old Colony," Tunis declared. "We've got fish and clams and cranberries in season, and some vegetables, that have to be shaken up and jounced together and squashed on those jolting steam trains. I'll lay

down a crate of lobsters at the T-wharf without a hair being ruffled. I know how to stow a cargo."

She nodded both her understanding and her belief that Tunis was right. The legacy he had received from the estate of Peleg Latham, Medford Latham's brother, had enabled Tunis to buy this beautiful schooner. Undoubtedly an eye for the beauty of the craft had more than a little drawn the young man into her purchase. Yet there was a foundation of solid sense under his streak of romance.

In this day a man must serve a long apprenticeship before he gets a command unless he owns the craft on which he is skipper. To own a schooner of the size of the *Seamew* is not enough. One must be a good merchant as well as a good skipper.

The coast trade from port to port along the North Atlantic shore must be fostered and coaxed like a stumbling baby. The tentacles of the hated railroad reach to many of the Cape ports. Yet everybody knows that a cargo properly stowed in a seaworthy craft reaches market in much the better condition than by rail, though perhaps it is some hours longer on the way.

There were docks, too, at which Tunis Latham could pick up well-paying freights which would have to be carted over bad roads to the nearest railway station. And there were always full or part cargoes to be had at Boston for certain single consignees along the Cape, which would pay a fair profit on the upkeep of the schooner. Medford Latham had lost almost all his fortune before he died so unhappily, leaving only the homestead and small farm to his son. The son, Captain Randall Latham, had lost the ship *Ada May* and every cent he possessed. Tunis had only his great uncle's legacy to begin on, and he had waited for that until he was thirty.

In the morning the young man arose early, for the tide was then low, and

started forth with basket and clam hoe on his arm. Aunt Lucretia had promised him, by a smiling nod, a mess of fritters for dinner if he would supply the necessary clams. Alongshore the soft clam is the only clam used for fritters; the tough, long-keeping quahog is shipped to the less-enlightened "city trade."

It was not yet sunrise, but as Tunis walked down through one of those cuts in the edge of the headland, following a well-defined cart track, he saw the rose-glow of the sun's round face staining the mist on the eastern horizon.

He came down upon the hard sand of the beach and walked toward a tiny cove into which the mud flats extended and on which he knew the clams were plentiful and ripe. Glistening pools of black water, showing where other diggers had raided the flat, were interspersed with trembling patches of black sand. When Tunis began to cross the flat the sand before his boots became alive with tiny, shooting geysers of clean water. He set to work.

And while he was thus engaged he heard suddenly a shrill outcry and a most mysterious sound up in one of the gullies toward the summit of Wreckers' Head. Here thousands of tons of sand had run out of the cut in the steep bank and formed a dyke-like way to the beach itself. More and more sand was slipping down this way all the time. A strong man could scarcely make his way up the incline, the sand was so unstable.

Tunis stood and stared up the slope. There shot into view, carried rapidly upon the forefront of the avalanche, a white-haired old man who waved a stick in one hand and a cocked pistol in the other, while from his mouth came shrill cries of excitement, if not of alarm.

But it was what followed Cap'n Ira Ball—whom Tunis immediately recognized—that caused the captain of the

Scamew such utter surprise. Sitting on her rump, pawing at the sliding sand with her front hoofs, and whistling her terror and amazement, the Queen of Sheba appeared flying after the harassed old man.

It was a scene to surprise more than to entertain the beholder. The avalanche promised disaster to the participants in it. Tons upon tons of sand, undulating and sinuous in appearance, traveled faster and yet faster behind the old gray mare and the gray old sea captain. The smoke of the slide hid all that lay behind them, and these wreaths of sand dust threatened a higher wave that might, at any moment, entirely overwhelm both the equine and the human victim of the catastrophe.

Tunis dropped his clam hoe and started for the dyke of sand on the crest of which the old man and the old mare were sliding like naughty children down a woodshed roof.

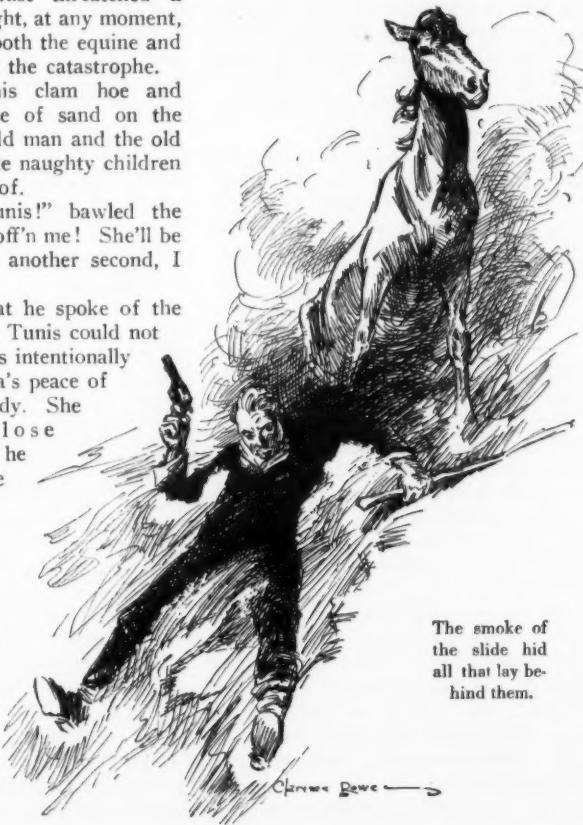
"Hey, Tunis! Tunis!" bawled the captain. "Take her off'n me! She'll be afoul my hawser in another second, I do believe."

It was evident that he spoke of the Queen of Sheba, but Tunis could not see how the mare was intentionally threatening Cap'n Ira's peace of mind or safety of body. She was, however, "close aboard" Cap'n Ira as he tobogganned down the sandy way.

"Stern all!" shouted the old man, throwing another startled, backward glance at the Queen of Sheba. "Drat the durned old critter! Don't she know nothin' at all? Tunis! Do you see what's goin' to happen?"

While the young man had been running toward the ridge of sand, the avalanche bearing Cap'n Ira and the Queen of Sheba on its bosom swept down the slope of the huge windrow, but not altogether along its spine. The mass slid over one pitch of the ridge, and suddenly, following on the heels of Cap'n Ira's final question, the old man was shot to the beach, several tons of loose sand and the snorting mare almost on top of him.

In fact, he would have been overwhelmed, and perhaps seriously hurt, had not Tunis Latham arrived at the



The smoke of
the slide hid
all that lay be-
hind them.

spot at just the time Cap'n Ira did, and suddenly pulled out the old man.

"What are you doing? Trying to run a race with Queenie?" demanded the captain of the *Seamew*.

The mare had come down right side up, more by good luck than by good management. She stood deep in the sand, her naturally surprised expression vastly enhanced. In all her twenty-two years Queenie had never before gone through such an experience.

"I swan!" ejaculated Cap'n Ira. "Ain't this the beatenest you ever heard of, Tunis?"

Tunis stared from the old mare to the old mariner, especially at the cocked revolver in the captain's hand. He pointed at the tightly gripped weapon.

"What's that for, Cap'n Ira?" he asked.

"I—I—well, I swan!" stammered Cap'n Ira, now looking, himself, at the old seven-chambered revolver as though he had never seen it before. "I cal'late it does look sort o' funny to you, Tunis, to see me come sailing down this way, armed like a pirate."

"I wouldn't call it exactly funny. But it is surprising," admitted Tunis. "And Queenie looks as surprised as anybody."

"Yes, she does, for a fact," agreed Cap'n Ira, squinting across the heap of loose sand at the gray mare. "I kind o' wonder what she's thinking about."

"I'm wondering hard enough myself," put in Tunis pointedly.

"I swan!" murmured Cap'n Ira reflectively.

He carefully lowered the hammer of the pistol, his cane stuck upright in the sand before him. Then he put the weapon back in the inside pocket of his coat. He tapped the knob of his cane for a pinch of snuff before he said another word. His mighty "A-choon!" startled the Queen of Sheba almost as it startled Prudence.

"Avast!" exclaimed Cap'n Ira. "Did you ever see such a scary old lubber, Tunis?"

"But what's it all about?" again demanded the younger man, seizing the rope halter and aiding the mare to flounder out upon the firmer sand below high-water mark. "What are you doing up so early? And what were you going to do with Queenie?"

"I swan!" groaned Cap'n Ira again. "I don't wonder that you ask me that. It don't really seem reasonable that a sane man would get in such a jam, does it? Me and the Queen of Sheby sailin' down that sand pile. Tunis! We'll never be able to get up in this world."

"No. You must come along to our road, and get up that way," his young friend told him. "It is longer, but easier. But tell me how you came down that gully, you and Queenie?"

"I'm sort of ashamed to tell you, Tunis, and that's a fact," the old captain said, wagging his head. "And don't you ever tell Prudence."

"I'll not say a word to Aunt Prue," promised the captain of the *Seamew*.

"Yet," grumbled the old man, "that dratted Queen of Sheby is too much for Prudence. You see yourself only yesterday how she is like to come to her death because of the mare."

"I know that you should have somebody living with you, Cap'n Ira," urged Tunis. "But what does *this* mean?"

"I—I can't scarcely tell you, Tunis. I swan! I was goin' to murder the old critter."

"What do you mean?" gasped Tunis in apparent horror. "Not Aunt Prue?"

"What's the matter with you?" snapped Cap'n Ira. "I mean that old mare. I was going to murder her in cold blood, only the sand slide wrecked my plans."

"If you had killed her, Aunt Prue would have had hard work to forgive you. Come on now. I'll lead Queenie up to our barn. Let her stay there

for a spell. I tell you Cap'n Ira, you and Aunt Prue must have somebody to live with you."

"Who?"

"Get a girl from the port."

"Huh! One o' them Portygees? They're as dirty and useless in the kitchen as their men folks are aboard ship."

"Oh, they are not all like that!" objected the captain of the *Seamew*. "I've got a good crew of 'em aboard my schooner."

"You think so. Wait till you get in a jam. And the men ain't so bad as the gals. All hussies."

"I don't know, then, what you'll do."

"I do," interrupted the old man, hobbling along the hard sand beside Tunis and the horse. "It's just like I told Prudence yesterday. I know just what we've got to do whether you or Prue or anybody else knows," and he was very emphatic.

"Let's hear your plan, Cap'n," said the young man.

"It's like this," went on Cap'n Ira. "Prudence ain't got but one living relative, a grandniece, that's kin to her. That Ida May Bostwick we must have come and live with us, and that's all there is about it."

Tunis stared. He said:

"Never heard of her. She doesn't live anywhere around here, does she?"

"No, no! Lives to Boston."

"Boston!"

Why was it Tunis Latham felt that his heart skipped a beat? Memory of that pale, violet-eyed girl who worked in the restaurant on Scollay Square flashed across his mind like a shooting star. Indeed, he was so confused that he heard only a little at first of Cap'n Ira's rambling explanation. Then he caught:

"And if you will go to that address—Prue's got the street and number—and see Ida May Bostwick and tell her

about us, you'd be doing us a kindness, Tunis."

"Me?" exclaimed the startled captain of the *Seamew*.

"Yes, you. The gal won't bite you. You're going to Boston next week, you say. Will you do it?"

"Sure I will, Cap'n Ira," said the young man heartily. "It's a good move, and I'll say all I can to get the girl to come down here."

"That's the boy! You're going on an errand of mercy; that's as sure as sure. Prue and me need that gal. And maybe she needs us. I don't know what sort of a place she works at, but no city job for a gal can be the equal of living down here on the Cape, with her own folks, as you might say. Yes, Tunis, you'll be doing an errand of mercy mebbe both ways."

CHAPTER V.

The *Seamew* was put in commission in a very few days. Tunis Latham had many friends in and about Big Wreck Cove, and he had little difficulty in picking up a cargo, which was loaded right at the port.

As for the schooner's crew, Tunis could have filled every billet four times over had he so desired. But he had already picked his crew with some care. Mason Chapin was mate, a perfectly capable navigator who might have used his ticket to get a berth on a much larger craft than the *Seamew*. But he had an invalid wife and wished only to leave home on brief voyages. Johnny Lark was shipped as cook, with a Portygee boy, Tony, to help him.

Forward, Horace Newbegin served as boatswain and Orion Latham was a sort of supercargo and general handy man. He was Tunis' cousin, several times removed. There were four Portygees to make up the company, a full crew for a sailing vessel of the tonnage of the *Seamew*. Yet every man was

needed in handling her lofty canvas and in loading and unloading freight.

With a well-stowed cargo below deck the schooner sailed even better than she had in ballast. She slipped out of the cove through the rather tortuous channel like an eel through the meshes of a broken trap. In the dawn, and with a fresh outside breeze just ruffling the sea into whitecaps, they broke out her upper sails and caught the very last breath of the gale the canvas would draw.

Cap'n Ira, and even Prudence, had got up before daybreak to see the schooner pass. They watched her, turn and turn about at the spyglass, till she was blotted out by the distant fog bank.

"I swan," said the old man, "when she heaves into view again I hope she'll have Ida May Bostwick aboard! That is what I hope."

"The dear girl!" breathed Prudence.

It never crossed their simple minds that Ida May Bostwick might see this chance they offered her in a different light from that in which they looked at it. The old couple made their innocent plans for the welcoming of the "grandniece," positive that a happy future was in store for both Ida May and themselves.

In Tunis Latham's mind there was more uncertainty regarding the mysterious Ida May Bostwick than there was in the minds of Cap'n Ira and Prudence. Whenever he considered his "errand of mercy" the captain of the *Seamew* had a flash of that girl with the violet eyes who worked in the restaurant on Scollay Square. The Balls did not know where Ida May worked. Prudence only had obtained the lodgings-house address of her young relative from Annabell Coffin, "she who was a Cuttle."

Of course, it was merely a faint and tenuous possibility that Ida May was a waitress. Still fainter was the chance that she would prove to be the girl with

the violet eyes that Tunis Latham remembered so distinctly. The Balls knew that she worked in a store, and all stores were the same to them. There might be a few hundred thousand other girls in Boston besides that particular girl whom he had saved from falling on the square.

Nevertheless, when the *Seamew* had unloaded and been warped to a berth in an outer tier of small craft to await her turn to load barrels and box shooks for a concern at Paulmouth, Captain Tunis started up into the city. He knew his way about Boston as well as any one not a native, and his first objective point was that restaurant on Scollay Square.

It was the dogwatch when Tunis Latham entered the eating place, but the dogwatch here was not at the same time of day as aboard ship. The captain's first startled glance about the room assured him that there was not a girl employee in sight, not even at the cashier's desk, and very few customers.

He ordered a late but hearty breakfast of the unshaven waiter in half-soiled apron and coat who lounged over his table.

"I thought they used to have girl waiters in this place?" the captain said when the man brought the tableware and glass of water.

"On from 'leven till eight. You're too early if you got a jane in your eye, bo," was the ribald reply. "The boss is a good guy." He sneered in the direction of the black-haired, coarse-looking man in the cashier's cage. "He hires them girls for five dollars less a week than he'd have to pay union waiters, and he asks no questions." He closed his recital with a wink so full of meaning that Tunis' palm itched to slap him.

But the guest's wind-bitten face betrayed no confusion nor further interest. The waiter judged he had mistaken his man, after all, and sneered

off until the ordered viands were ready at the slide.

He hesitated to question that coarse man, even to mention Ida May Bostwick's name to him. The waiter had misinterpreted his first remark about the waitresses. The proprietor might hold any question he asked regarding Ida May against the record of the violet-eyed girl, if by any wild possibility that should be her name. There was time still, he thought, to find her at her lodgings before she started for the restaurant, if she worked here.

So Tunis paid his check and strode forth. The lodging of Ida May Bostwick was not in this neighborhood, of course, not even in the West End. In fact, it was in the South End, in one of those streets running more or less parallel to lower Shawmut Avenue. He took a car in the subway and got off near the address Prudence Ball had given him.

To the mind of the Cape man, used as he was to the open spaces of both sea and land, these dingy blocks of brick houses, three and four stories in height, all quite alike in smoke and squalor and even in the pattern of the net curtains at their parlor windows, made as dreary a picture as he had ever imagined. He thought of that pale, slender, violet-eyed girl coming back to this ugly block at night, after long hours at the restaurant, having to look forward to nothing more beautiful, in all probability, inside the house where she lodged. Who would not be glad, overjoyed, indeed, to get away from such an environment?

He found the number. The house was no worse and no better than its neighbors. By stains on the blistered bricks beside the door frame he gathered that scraps of paper advertising empty rooms had often been pasted there. He rang the bell at the top of the rail-guarded steps. After a time he rang again.

He could hear the bell jangle somewhere in a distant part of the house. Nobody came in answer to his summons, not even after his third ring. At length the creaking, iron-barred gate in the area warned him that the main door at which he rang was not in use at that hour of the day. A woman in a house dress as ugly as the street itself, and with untidy gray hair and a bar of smut on her cheek, craned her neck from this opening to look up at him.

"There's no use your ringing. I ain't got an empty room, young man," she announced.

He descended spryly into the area before she could close the gate. Her near-sighted scowl misjudged him again, for she added:

"Nor I don't want to buy anything."

"One moment, ma'am," he cried. "I have nothing for sale. I'd like to see somebody who lodges here."

"Who?" asked the woman, peering at him curiously.

"Miss Bostwick."

"You'll have to come this evening."

"Oh! She has—has gone to work already?"

"My stars! Do you know what time it is, young man?" demanded the lodging-house keeper. "It's after ten o'clock."

Already Tunis Latham's hopes began to sink.

"Then—then she goes to work early?"

"Lemme tell you, them that works for Hoskin & Marl have to show up by eight or they lose their jobs."

The name "Hoskin & Marl" stuck in Tunis' memory. He had heard it before. He was instantly sure it was not over the door of the Scollay Square restaurant.

"And she will not be in until evening?" he repeated.

"'Bout seven. She gets her supper before she comes home. I don't give meals."



The girl patted her hair into place with a languid hand. Her lips parted in a teasing smile. This "hick" really amused her.

"Where is this place she works at?" asked the captain of the *Seamew*, with a suppressed sigh.

"Guess you are a stranger in town, aren't you?" said the curious landlady. "I thought everybody knew Hoskin & Marl's. It's on Tremont Street. The big department store."

"Oh! Miss Bostwick works there?"

"In the laces. You can't know her very well, young man."

"I come from her folks down on the Cape," he thought it his duty to explain. "I've a message for her."

"On the Cape? My stars! I never knowed she had any country relatives. Are they rich? They ain't died and left her a fortune, have they?" were the eager questions.

"The ones I speak of are still alive," Tunis said gravely, backing up the steps to the sidewalk. "Thank you, ma'am. I'll go to that store and speak to her there. Thank you."

Before she could evolve another question, Tunis had escaped. He walked smartly away, not only to outdistance the lodging-house keeper's voice, but because he was confused and disappointed. Ida May Bostwick could not work in a department store and in an eating house as well. Of course not! And now that this point was an established fact in his mind, he admitted that he had been utterly foolish to imagine for a moment that he had already met her, that she was the violet-eyed girl in whom he had taken an interest.

Right at the start he had known that a girl working in an eating house like that was not the sort of person he could introduce to Aunt Lucretia. And so why had he imagined that she would prove to be the great-niece of Prudence Ball? It was ridiculous!

Of course, this Ida May came of good Cape stock. At least, on one side of her family. The Honeys were as good as the Lathams or the Balls.

"Just the same," muttered Tunis. "I hope she has red hair and green eyes. What do I want to be bothering about either of 'em for? I have my hands full with that schooner, if anybody should ask you."

Thus condemning his foolish fancies he strode downtown again. He knew where Hoskin & Marl's was. He had been in the place. When he reached the department store he marched straight in, meaning to have an immediate interview with the girl at the lace counter.

CHAPTER VI.

Tunis Latham suffered all the timidity of the average man when he got into the maze of that department store. There is a psychological reason for the haberdashery goods, the line for the mere male, being placed always within sight of a principal exit. The catacombs of Rome would be no more terrifying in prospect for a man than a venture into the farther intricacies of Hoskin & Marl's.

The captain of the *Seamew* could box the compass with the next seafarer, but he lost all idea of the points on the card before he had been three minutes in the store, and he had to hail a floor-walker to get his bearings.

"Lace counter? Right this way, sir. Yes, sir. Just over there. Our—er—Miss Bostwick will serve you, sir. Forward!"

The wind and sun had heightened

Tunis Latham's naturally florid complexion to about as deep a red as can easily be imagined, but he felt the back of his neck and his ears burning as he approached the counter to which he was directed. A girl had detached herself from a group at the farther end, and now came toward him. All that he first saw clearly, however, was a pair of eyes staring at him from behind the counter. They were not violet eyes; neither were they green.

The girl who owned those twinkling, needle-sharp eyes was nothing like that girl he had been thinking of so much since his previous visit to Boston. She was rather small, dressed in the extreme mode in a cheap way, wearing a tawdry gilt chain, several rings, and a wrist watch. There was something about her which reminded Tunis very strongly of the girls of Portygee Town, although she was a pronounced blonde.

Her hair was really her only attractive possession. Those sharp brown eyes did not please Tunis Latham at all. And there was a certain smart boldness in her manner, too, which caused him a distinct feeling of repugnance.

He plunged into his errand with all the boldness that a bashful man usually displays when he finally gets his courage to the sticking point.

"You are Miss Bostwick?" he asked.

"What kind of lace—goodness! Who are you?" asked the girl, her stilted, saleslady manner changing to amazement with surprising suddenness.

"I live at Big Wreck Cove. I guess you've heard of it," said Tunis.

"Big Wreck Cove? Do tell!" Her eyes danced. "You're from down on the Cape, then. I guess you want some lace for your wife. What kind did she send you for?"

Tunis brushed this aside bluntly.

"I don't want any lace," he told her. "I come from your aunt, Mrs. Ira Ball."

"My aunt? Fancy!"

She has heard about you," went on

Tunis. "I guess she thought a heap of your mother. She—she'd like to see you, Mrs. Ball would."

The girl patted her hair into place with a languid hand. Her lips parted in a teasing smile. This "hick" really amused her.

"Just to think! Would she?" she drawled. "Is she in town?"

"Who? Mrs. Ball? I should say not. She's down at Big Wreck Cove, I tell you."

"Oh, really? I thought by the way you spoke she was outside—in her car." She tossed her head with that same tantalizing smile, almost a grimace. "What did you want to tell me?"

Tunis realized that he could not talk to her here, after all. The idle girls at the end of the counter were already whispering, and their smiles were poignant javelins of ridicule. The captain of the *Seamew* knew that he was far beyond his depth.

"Where can I talk to you?" he asked.

"I get away for my lunch hour in a few minutes. I could talk to you then. But us girls ain't supposed to entertain our friends at the counter." She flashed him another amused and quite comprehending glance.

"I've a message for you from Aunt Prue and the captain. Captain Ira Ball. He's her husband," explained Tunis jerkily.

"Oh, really? Mr. Judson is coming this way." She flirted open a card of cheap lace lying on the counter. "Won't this do, sir?"

"Cat's foot! I don't want any lace," growled the captain of the *Seamew*.

"And I don't want to lose my job," rejoined the girl sharply.

"Where'll I meet you so we can talk?"

"At twelve forty-five," hissed the girl out of the corner of her mouth, beginning to wind up the lace again. "Back entrance to the store." Then,

aloud: "Sorry, sir. We haven't any cheaper quality in that pattern."

He knew she was ridiculing him. He was cognizant, however, of the department head's hard stare and the amused glances of the other saleswomen. He strode out of the store, and on the sidewalk halted to mop his face and neck with a blue-bordered handkerchief.

"She's as sassy as a chipmunk. I declare! What would Cap'n Ira and Aunt Prue do with a girl like her around the house? And the way she's dressed!"

In his mind the idea germinated that he would be doing a far better thing if he did not go around to the employees' door and wait for Ida May Bostwick. What sort of life would she lead the two old people down there on Wreckers' Head? He actually shrank from being a party to such an arrangement.

Not for a moment did he think that Miss Bostwick might not jump at the chance to change her place of residence from a South End lodging house to the Ball homestead overlooking Big Wreck Cove and the sea. He had seen that she was afraid of her boss in the store. The rules there must be very strict. He had noted that everything about the girl, her apparel and her ornaments, was cheap and tawdry. She must be both poor and unhappy. Why should she not jump at the chance of bettering herself?

What would Cap'n Ira say when he caught his first glimpse of that painted and powdered face? How could good Aunt Prue take to her heart the bold, jeering shopgirl, evidently born and bred as far from the old standards of Cape Cod breeding as could be imagined? No matter how fine a girl Sarah Honey was, her daughter was of a cheap city type.

But Tunis Latham did not stand in the position of a judge. He had not been told to use his powers of observa-

tion before placing the Balls' offer before Ida May Bostwick. He had no discretion in the matter at all.

So he went around to the street behind Hoskin & Marl's at the required time and spent five or ten minutes backed up against a blank wall under the sharp scrutiny of every girl who hurried out of the big store on her way to lunch. Ida May came, at last.

Tunis Latham in his go-ashore uniform and cap was no unsightly figure. A stern tranquillity of countenance lent him dignity. He attracted a certain respect wherever he went, but, as has been said, there was nothing harsh in his appearance.

The girl gave him an appraising scrutiny as she walked toward him. While covering those few yards she made up her mind about Tunis on several points. One was that she would not lunch this noon at any cafeteria or automat!

"Really," she said, with downcast g'ance, as the man got into step beside her, "I don't feel that I know you well enough to talk to you at all, Mister—Mister—"

"My name's Tunis Latham. I'm owner and skipper of the schooner *Seamew*. I live right handy to your uncle and aunt."

"Goodness! You don't mean I've got an uncle and aunt down there on the Cape? I never heard of them."

"They are your great-uncle and great-aunt. Aunt Prue must have been your mother's own aunt."

"So you are my Cousin—er—Tunis?"

His face flamed and he did not look at her.

"That doesn't follow," he said. "Aunt Prue is my aunt only in a manner of speaking. But she is your blood relation."

"Yes? I suppose she's a dear old soul?"

"They are mighty nice folks," Tunis replied stoutly. "As nice as any in all Barnstable County."

"But—er—sort of simple?"

The girl asked it with a perfectly innocent countenance. Tunis flashed her a look that showed comprehension.

"Just about as simple as I am," he said.

"Oh!"

"Where'll we go to eat?" he asked cheerfully, considering that he had the best of it so far.

They came out upon Tremont Street and now started downtown. He desired to get no nearer to that eating house on Scollay Square. At least, not with his present companion.

"There's the Barquette," said Miss Bostwick, with the air of one used daily to the grandeur of such hostleries.

But Tunis had seen her lodgings! However, her airs amused him, and Tunis Latham was no penny squeezer. He headed straight in for the dining room, where a gloriously appareled negro head waiter appraised him as being "all right," and Ida May got by, without knowing it, upon the captain's substantial appearance.

While the waiter was away, Tunis bluntly put his errand before her. He felt it his duty to make the offer as attractive as possible. But he did not make small the fact that the Balls were old and needed her services.

"Goodness! What do they want me for—a nurse?" she demanded tartly.

The question put Tunis on his mettle. He explained that Cap'n Ira and his wife were comfortably "fixed," as Cape people considered comfort, with a home free and clear of all encumbrances, and investments that yielded a sufficient support. Ida May, as he understood it, would share their home and their means.

"And you want I should go down to that place and live on pollack and potatoes till them folks die, for the sake of just a *home*?" she demanded, her brown eyes snapping.

"I don't want you to do anything,"

he pointed out coolly enough. "I am merely repeating their offer. They are your folks."

"And I know all about what it is down there," the girl said quickly. "My mother came from there. She was glad enough to get away, too, I warrant. Why should I give up a good job and the city to live in such a dead-and-alive hole?"

"That is for you to decide," Tunis replied, not without secret relief.

He could not understand her attitude. He remembered that South End lodging house with secret horror. But evidently Ida May Bostwick was wedded to the tawdry conveniences and gayeties of city life. Tunis could not wholly understand why any sane person should assume this attitude; in fact, he suspected a good deal of it was put on. How could a girl, even one as inconsequential and flighty as Ida May evidently was, hold in contempt the offer he had brought her from Cap'n Ira and his wife?

But he had done all that could be expected of him. All, indeed, that he thought wise. Disappointed as the old couple would be by Ida May's refusal, Tunis felt that to urge her to reconsider the matter would not be in the best interests of her elderly relatives. They needed a young companion there on Wreckers' Head, needed one very sorely, but not such a person as Ida May Bostwick.

"Then, that will be your final answer, Miss Bostwick?" he said slowly, as Ida May played with her ice.

"Say! I wouldn't go down to that hole for a million," scoffed the girl. "I guess you wouldn't stand it yourself, only you're off on your ship most of the time."

"I like the Cape," he said briefly.

"Never lived in the city, did you?"

"I never did."

"Then you don't know any better," she told him confidently. "And you

don't really look like such a dead one, at that."

"Thank you."

She smiled saucily into his rather grim face. Then she opened her bag and deliberately powdered her nose before rising from the table.

"Thanks for a pleasant hour," she drawled. "You tell auntie and Uncle Josh to get a girl from the poor farm or somewhere to do their chores and tuck 'em in nights. Me, I don't mean to live out of sight of movie signs and electric lights. I'd like to see myself!"

She was both rude and common. Tunis was glad to get out of the dining room. Ida May attracted altogether too much attention. And she had quite openly eyed his well-lined wallet when he paid the waiter. To a girl like Ida May, all was fish that swam into her net. Crude as she considered him, Tunis Latham was a man with some money. And he evidently knew how to spend it.

"When you're in town I'd be glad to see you any time, Mr. Latham. Or do I say captain?"

She smiled up at the big, broad-shouldered fellow bravely as she trotted along in the skirt that made her hobble like a cripple. The captain of the *Seamerw* did not respond very cordially, and quite overlooked her personal question.

"I don't expect to spend much time in Boston," he said. "Thank you. Then I shall report to Aunt Prue and Cap'n Ira that you will not consider their offer at all?"

"I should say not!" She laughed lightly. "You don't know, I guess, what we girls expect nowadays, if we give up our independence."

"Independence!" snorted Tunis.

"That's what I said," rejoined Ida May tartly. "When the store closes my time's my own. I can do as I please. And I've got nobody to please but my-

self. Oh, you don't understand at all, Captain Latham!"

He said no more. Nor did he escort her farther than the corner. There he lifted his cap and took her offered hand. Although it was beringed and the nails were stained and polished, Tunis could not help noticing that Ida May's hand was not altogether clean.

"Well, au revoir, captain!" she said lightly. "I hope I see you again."

He bowed silently and watched her depart. The sunshine glinted gloriously upon her fluffy hair.

"Fool's gold," he muttered.

CHAPTER VII.

The captain of the *Seamew* found himself facing an unpleasant problem. How could he make the Balls, either Cap'n Ira or Prudence, understand the kind of girl Ida May was? How could he even bring them to understand that nothing he could have said would have ever made Ida May Bostwick see the situation in its true light?

Why, the old couple could never be made to believe that a girl in her sane senses would turn down cold such a proposition as they had made. They would suspect that he had failed to put it to her in the proper light. His "errand of mercy," as Cap'n Ira had called it, had seemed so reasonable for both sides!

Tunis realized that he had not urged the matter to the girl. But there was a reason for that. The difficulty would be in explaining to the Balls just how unsuitable Ida May was. They would never believe that the daughter of Sarah Honey could be such a cheap and inconsequential person as she had actually proved to be.

"It's going to hit 'em 'twixt wind and water, and hit 'em hard," muttered the captain of the *Seamew*. "One thing that girl said was right, I guess. They'd better get somebody from the

poor farm, rather than take her into their house. Such a creature would be happier with the Balls, and make them happier. But it's pretty tough when those of your own blood go back on you."

The experience had left a bad taste in Tunis Latham's mouth. He hoped heartily that he would never see Ida May Bostwick again. He never intended to if he could help it. To take his mind off the fiasco entirely, he hopped on to a car and rode out to the art museum and spent the afternoon in the quiet galleries where the masters, little and great, are hung.

He came downtown at nightfall, threading the paths of the public gardens and the common malls of Charles and Beacon Streets, with a feeling of immense calm in his soul. Tunis Latham possessed keenly contrasting attributes of character. On the one hand he was of a rather practical mind and thought; on the other, his love of beauty and appreciation of nature's greater forces might have made of him an artist under more liberal conditions of birth and breeding.

Ida May Bostwick had rasped all the finer feelings of the captain of the *Seamew*. He was happy to be able to get her out of his mind. In fact, he had put aside thought of any girl. Romance no longer enmeshed his cogitations. He was utterly calm, unruffled, serene, as he descended by the twists and turns of certain streets beyond the State House and came out finally upon the now lighted and bustling square.

He halted, like a pointer dog, before the eating place where he had had breakfast.

Tunis Latham felt a certain shock. That girl with the violet eyes had been farthest from his thought at the moment, and for some hours now. He had lumped together the whole girl question and had relegated it to the back of his mind.

And perhaps he was cured. He looked at it more sensibly after the first moment. It was not thought of the girl that had brought him here. Habit is strong in most of us. The urge of a healthy appetite was more likely what had caused him to halt before the restaurant door.

It was after seven. Following his walk from the Back Bay it was little wonder that he was hungry. But should he enter this place? There were several other restaurants in sight of about the same standard. Tunis Latham did not make a practice of patronizing places similar to the Barquette when he ate alone.

To pass on and enter another restaurant would be to confess weakness. He really cared nothing about that girl with the violet eyes. She very probably was no better and no worse than Ida May Bostwick. All these city shopgirls were about of a pattern. He had allowed sentiment to sway him for a few hours. But sentiment had received a jolt during his interview with the girl from the lace department of Hoskin & Marl's.

"Cat's foot!" ejaculated the captain of the *Seamew*. "I guess I'm not afraid to take another look at that girl, if she's in here. Probably two looks will be about all I'll want," and he grinned rather wryly as he approached the door.

The place was well patronized at this hour; and the "lady help" was much in evidence, flying back and forth from tables to slide and "déaling 'em off the arm" with a rapidity and dexterity that was most amazing, Tunis thought. There was even a girl in the cashier's cage, while the black-haired man he had paid his check to that forenoon was walking about with a sharp eye for everything that went on.

The Cape man started down the room for an empty seat. Somebody was ahead of him and he backed away. A soft voice, a voice that thrilled Tunis

Latham before he saw the speaker at all, said just behind him:

"There is a seat here, sir."

He knew it was she of the violet eyes before he turned about. It seemed to the seaman the voice matched the beautiful eyes of which he had thought so often during the past few days. They must belong together!

He turned to look at her. She was gathering up the soiled dishes from a table at which was an empty seat. First of all, Tunis secured it. Then he glanced keenly at the girl.

Would she remember him? Had his face and appearance been photographed upon her memory as her face had been printed on his? She did not look at him then. She was busy clearing the enameled top of the table and wiping off the coffee stains and the wet rings made by the water glass.

She had black hair and a great deal of it, deep black, glossy, fine of texture, and very well brushed. Black hair and those velvety violet eyes, the long, black lashes of which were a most delicate fringe! The brows were boldly dashed on against her smooth, almost colorless, but perfect skin. Tunis had never before seen any feminine loveliness the equal of this girl, this waitress in a cheap restaurant!

Yet a casual glance would scarcely have discovered much attractive about the girl. Had he not looked so deep into her violet eyes at the instant of their first meeting, perhaps the captain of the *Seamew* would never have given her the second glance. There was a timidity about her, a shrinking in her very attitude, that would naturally displease even an observant person.

Her nose, mouth, and chin, were only ordinarily well formed. Nothing remarkable at all about them. But the texture of her skin, it seemed to the man, was the finest he had ever beheld. Her figure was slight, but supple. Every line, accentuated by the common black



dress she wore, was graceful. Her throat was bare and she wore no ornament. His sharp gaze flashed to her left hand. It was guiltless of any band. He had begun to flush at the thought which prompted this last observation, and grabbed at a stained bill of fare to cover his sudden confusion.

She moved away with the piled-up dishes. His gaze followed her covertly. Even her walk was graceful, not at all the hobble or the jerky pace or the slouch of the other waitresses.

By and by she came back. She brought tableware and a glass of water. She placed them meticulously before him. Then, for the first time it seemed, she looked at Tunis Latham. She halted, her hand still upon the water glass. She quivered all over. The water slopped upon the table.

"Oh, is it you, sir?" she said in that timid, breathless whisper he so well remembered.

"Good evening," Tunis rejoined. "I hope you are well?"

"Oh, yes, sir! Quite well. What will you have, sir?"

She no longer looked at him. Her gaze was roving about her tables, but more often fixed upon the broad, apaca-coated shoulders of the restaurant proprietor at the front of the room.

Tunis ordered almost at random. She repeated the viands he named. There was a tiny tendril of her hair that curled low upon her neck at one side, caressing the pale satin sheen of the skin. He felt an overpowering desire to lean forward and press his lips to the tiny curl!

As though she comprehended his secret wish, a wave of color stained her throat and cheeks from the line of her frock to her hair. It poured up under the pallor of the skin, transfiguring her expression ravishingly. Instead of her countenance being rather wan and weary looking, in a moment it became as vivid as a freshly opened flower.

She turned swiftly, departing with his order. Tunis was conscious of a hoarse voice at his elbow. He glanced aside. His neighbor in the next chair was a little, common man, with a little, common face, on which was a little, common leer.

"A pip, I'll tell the world," was the neighbor's comment. "Whadjer s'pose brought her into this dump?"

"The necessity for earning her living," replied Tunis, without looking again at the man.

"With a face like that?" suggested the man, and fell wordless again, but not silent, as he attacked his soup.

If there was an opportunity to speak to the girl again, Tunis could scarcely do so, he thought, for her own sake. It would attract the attention not only of the fellow beside him, but of others.

He felt an overpowering desire, however, to talk with her. His recently born determination to have nothing more to do with any girl had melted like snow in July. That feeling, which had

come through his experience with Ida May Bostwick, seemed a sacrilege when he considered this girl.

The man beside him, noisily finishing his soup, ordered apple-meringue pie when the waitress returned with Tunis' order. The latter noted that her fingers still trembled when she placed his food before him. When she brought the pie she reached for the man's check and punched another hole in it. Tunis was careful not to raise his own eyes to her face. But all the time he was trying to invent some way by which he might further his acquaintance with her.

He must be back at the *Seamew* that night. To-morrow the cargo would come aboard and, wind and tide being ordinarily favorable, the schooner would put to sea as soon as the hatches were battened down. He could not continue to come here to the restaurant for his meals and so grasp the frail chance of bolstering his acquaintance with the girl. Indeed, he felt that such an obvious course would utterly wreck any chance he might naturally have of knowing her better.

The timidity she evinced was nothing put on. It was real. Its cause he could not fathom, but to Tunis Latham it seemed that this girl with the violet eyes was a gentle girl, if not gently bred, and that she shrank from contact with the rougher elements of life. How she came to be working in this place was not of moment to him. It would not have mattered to Tunis Latham where he had met her or under what circumstances; he only knew that there was a mysterious charm about her which attracted and held his heart captive.

"Will you have anything more, sir?" The low, yet penetrating voice was in his ear. She hovered over his chair and her near presence thrilled him. He had not much more than played with the food. Now he replied briefly, without thinking:

"Apple-meringue."

"Yes, sir."

His neighbor pushed back his chair and got up noisily. He picked up his check, glanced at it, and snorted.

"Hey!" he said to the girl returning with Tunis' pie. "What's this for?"

"Yes, sir?"

"You've rung me up an extra nickel. What's the idea?"

"Fifteen cents for meringue, sir."

"Huh? Who had meringue? I had apple pie, plain apple pie. It's ten cents. This feller"—indicating Tunis—"ordered apple-meringue; not me."

He held out his check for correction belligerently.

"You ordered apple-meringue, sir, and I brought it. You ate it. The check is correct."

Low and timid as the voice was, gently as the words were spoken, Tunis sensed an undercurrent of firmness and determination in the girl's character that he had not before suspected.

"Say, you don't put nothing like that over on me!" exclaimed the man loudly.

Tunis moved in his chair. He saw the black-haired man at the front of the restaurant swing about to face down the room. He had heard this unseemly disturbance.

"I will call the manager."

"And so will I—I'll call him good!" sneered the patron. "He knows that you damn crooks in here overcharge. He puts you up to it. That's why he hires jailbirds and—"

Tunis had got up, pushed back his chair with his foot, and as the girl uttered a horrified gasp at the rough speech, he seized the man. His grip on the back of the fellow's coat between his shoulders brought a startled grunt from lips parted to continue his black-guardism.

"Hey! What d'ye mean?" roared the fellow, as Tunis twisted him into the aisle.

"You dog!" said the captain of the

Seamew in a low voice. "Down on your knees and ask the lady's pardon for that speech!"

The black-haired man started toward them. His coarse face had a smile on it as vicious as the snarl of a tiger. He put up his hand in a gesture of command.

"Beg her pardon!" repeated Tunis, and by the great weight of his hand crushed the squalling patron of the restaurant to his knees before the terrified girl.

"Stop that! What do you mean?" cried the manager of the restaurant, still several yards away.

The patrons of the place had been thinning out for the last few minutes. Most of those remaining were near the front. Some of the waitresses were already seated at a table next to the kitchen slide, eating their suppers.

"Take him off me!" roared the man squirming on the floor under Tunis Latham's hand. "That thief of a girl set him on me. This is a nice thing, be overcharged and then assaulted!"

He was talking for the benefit of the black-haired man. The latter swooped down upon them. His face was purple with wrath and his fat jowls trembled.

"Let him up! Do you hear me?" he exclaimed.

"He insulted this lady," said Tunis, indicating the waitress. "You just heard him repeat it. He'll beg her pardon or I'll wring his neck."

"What do you mean?" cried the restaurant man. "What is the girl to you? One of her friends, are you? Well, you are doing her no good with me, I assure you."

The captain of the *Seamew* flung the little man face down upon the floor and held him there with his foot while he reached with both hands for the proprietor. He got him. The latter uttered a squeak like a captured rat.

"You're another of the same breed, are you?" Tunis demanded. "You'll

beg her pardon, too, or I'll crack the heads of the two of you together! Come!"

He stood the man on his feet before the waitress with such force that his teeth rattled. He stooped and yanked the other to an upright posture likewise. The shrinking girl, Tunis noticed, was not weeping. She looked at all he did

as though she approved. The other girls were shrieking. The cashier had run to the door and cried into the street for the police. But that violet-eyed girl, timid as she naturally was, did not open her lips.

"She's a plucky little lady," thought Tunis Latham. "But somebody's got to stand up for her."

TO BE CONTINUED.



RAIN AT THE COAST

A GRAY, gray sea that does not brawl,
But sulks, and laps a darkened beach;
An empty sky, no sea bird's call,
No passing launch with saucy screech;
Only the pat of thin soft rain,
Drenching the sandhills' deepest grain;
Only the crusted salt, like rime,
As if November crisped again.

Oh, perjured summer, where's your blue?
In my snug home I might have spent
These hours, bereft of azure hue,
Dull as a gypsy's sloven tent!
Only within my true love's eyes
The lost sweet color changeless lies,
And into them I'll look all day
Till sunset brings me clearer skies.

RHEEM DOUGLAS.

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Pieces of Eight

By William Almon Wolff

Author of "Freedom," "Path of Gold," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HERBERT R. NORTON

Romance on forty cents! Not likely to be anything remarkable, you say? Read the story and see.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON once wrote that the worst of all cities in which to be poor was Paris. That statement is profoundly true—of a man overtaken by insolvency in the capital of France. But I challenge you to find any man who, being temporarily destitute, will not assert, and prove, that the city in which he finds himself is, of all the cities in the world, the worst for a man in such a plight.

The footstool of disaster that had tripped Bob Armstrong was New York. His fall was not a sudden one; the simile of tripping was chosen with care. He stumbled, first; recovered himself, and staggered along for a brief time before he went down. He was living, when he first had occasion to distrust his feet, in a bachelor hotel, comfortable, even luxurious. Before the end he reached, through boarding houses of various degrees, a hall bedroom in a house so old, so utterly out of all keeping with the spirit of the times, that on his floor there was no light save that afforded by oil lamps.

A growing distaste for the metropolis of the western world, a gathering conviction of its essential coldness and lack of heart, marked Bob's descent. Bid-

den to speak a piece in praise of New York, urged, further, to say it with flowers, Bob would have chosen lemon blossoms. But then, San Francisco was his home; he would never, at best, have been anything but a stranger in New York.

Bob would have found being broke in San Francisco easier than being broke in New York. That sentence, upon consideration, appears to be misleading. He had found it singularly, painfully easy to be broke in New York. What is meant is that in San Francisco a score of bank accounts would have been at his disposal; a hundred helping hands would have been stretched out to aid him. That was one reason he was in New York. If you seek consistency in this young man, you will be disappointed.

It has been intimated that he did, ultimately, come to the end of his stumbling. Well, he was walking home one afternoon in early winter. He had forty cents; he had just failed to get a job which, for a brief time, he had considered his; his landlady had issued an ultimatum. When he reached his dwelling she awaited him at the door.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Brown," he said. "I didn't get the job."

"Then I shall have to have the room to-morrow. I warned you, Mr. Armstrong."

"Of course," he said pleasantly. "That's quite understood. I'm sorry that I shall have to owe you for the three weeks for a little while."

He was much sorrier for her than for himself. Indeed, he wasn't sorry for himself at all; he was just annoyed.

"I wish I could let you stay."

"Please don't worry," he said. He

understood perfectly the reluctance with which she gave voice to such emotion as she felt. In Mrs. Brown's business the display of emotion was dangerous. He went upstairs to his room. It was not much of a room; when you had called it clean you had given it all the kind words it merited. Still, it was as good a place as any for that session concerning ways and means which it behooved Bob to hold.

The means he tabulated at once: a dime, a quarter, five pennies. Forty cents. And yet, few as were the means, they were more numerous than the ways that presented themselves. Not unnaturally he became retrospective.

It seemed to him that he had deserved better things. He didn't rail at the accident which had brought him

face to face, through his father's premature death, with the need of making a living; he had never planned to depend upon his father.

He was almost startled as he glanced in his mirror. He jingled the coins in his pocket. "Forty cents?" he said, and laughed. "Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!"



He had, certainly, availed himself of the independence his father's interest in his special field of work had given him to devote himself to study, rather than to gainful occupation; that had looked like a good investment.

Indeed, despite the failure of returns, he still failed to see wherein his investment of time had been mistaken. He had always intended to come to New York with his idea, once it was fully worked out. His father's death, and the collapse of the Armstrong fortunes, had only hastened his coming.

He had brought letters of introduction of the strongest sort to men highly placed in the financial world. He had brought, likewise, certain plans, the result of a great deal of work, concerning export trade to South America. He knew that field, and he had succeeded in evolving a new plan of credits that looked as if it would solve the old problem of giving South American merchants as much time as they needed to meet their bills, something American exporters had never been able to do.

New York had not been greatly stirred by his arrival. The news of his coming had not preempted the first pages of the newspapers for more than three or four days.

Let this be understood. Bob didn't just think he had devised a good plan; he had done so. He really was a banking genius. Which made it seem rather a waste of talent to give him only forty cents to manipulate. It was as if Harry Vardon or Ted Ray had to coach the croquet team of St. Ursula's Academy for Young Ladies for lack of money enough to buy a set of golf clubs.

The trouble was that, in spite of his letters of introduction, he hadn't seen a single one of the men he had come to see. Not that he had confined himself to sitting about their anterooms. He had held several jobs; born a square peg, he had tried to fill several round holes. He had no bitterness in his heart

for the various men who had fired him; indeed he respected their judgment. What did irk him was the way he had fared at the hands of the bodyguards of the men to whom he had brought letters.

They were so darned migratory! He couldn't see why they maintained elaborate offices they never visited. He had seen any number of suave secretaries, who had assured him, over and over again, that when Mr. So-and-so returned from Europe, or Florida, or the Muskoka Lakes, or wherever, according to the season, he happened to be, he would be delighted to see Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong was leaving his address? Yes, as soon as Mr. So-and-so returned, then—diminuendo, ad libitum, da capo. And that was that.

He'd had other letters, too, to the wives of those same men, and to other ladies, socially potent. These hadn't interested him so much, but he'd presented them, out of consideration for their givers. And their results hadn't proved exciting. One or two receptions and teas, affairs at which he'd bowed to harried hostesses who neither knew nor had time to care who he might be. And that had been that.

All of which, as he looked back upon it, was interesting, but without any obvious bearing upon the problems of the immediate future. For example, he was hungry. And he had forty cents. But he was going to be hungry in the morning, too. His mind began to revolve, distressingly, about those three focal points, in concentric circles, as it were. Few minds are capable of concentric, circular thinking. So he got up, with some idea that he could think better outdoors. And then he saw what he had not noticed when he came in, before his lamp was lighted, an envelope that had been pushed under the door.

He glanced at the addresses curiously. This envelope had followed him about; the various erasures and for-

warding addresses marked the downward curve of his fortunes. It was a rich-looking envelope; it had the same quality of offensiveness as the fat calves of a pompous footman. Still, he opened it. And then he laughed. For this was an invitation, and, ironically, for that very evening. Mrs. Morgan Beresford, perhaps the greatest of those ladies to whom he had brought letters, begged him to assist in the presentation of her daughter, which was to be accomplished by a ball of the Thousand Nights and a Night.

"Can you beat it?" said Bob.

He threw the invitation toward the wastebasket. But then the corners of his mouth turned upward; they began to twitch. After all, why not? The session concerning ways and means was not yet adjourned. At such entertainments supper was served. His fingers, thrust into his pocket, played with his forty cents. And his breakfast, his last meal, had been worthy of neither name.

Ways and means, again. Some crazy impulse that had moved him when he was packing his things in San Francisco made it just possible for him to accept this invitation. For in his trunk was a costume he had worn once, the gorgeous garb of a buccaneer—boots, breeches, sash, headband, knife, pistol, everything. Had he been bidden to a function involving the black and white of evening he could not have gone; he would have faced no problem of decision. A pirate of the Spanish Main, one of Morgan's men, might be anachronistic, but that would pass.

At half past eleven he was ready, a pirate to the life. Another factor had swayed him. The Beresford house, standing upon a corner of Fifth Avenue within sight of the Washington Arch, was less than half a dozen blocks, as the fence cat walks, from his window. He had no need to think of taxicabs.

The mustache his garb demanded was

missing. That deficiency, however, he had repaired. He had turned up the wick of his lamp; when the chimney was well smoked he had been able to create the illusion of mustachios with his finger. He was almost startled as he glanced in his mirror. He jingled the coins in his pocket.

"Forty cents?" he said, and laughed. "Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!"

There were other guests arriving on foot when he reached the house; about the door children were gathered, gaping at those who entered the gates of fairyland. His arrival was well timed; he came with the crowd. The dressing room was crowded. He had no great delay there; he saw, to his comfort, that there had been plenty, like himself, who had failed to strike the Oriental note.

There was music in the air when he emerged. Its strains guided him to a room that, for the night, had been transformed into a Bagdad street. He caught his breath at the sheer beauty of the scene; the incredible blue above, the white walls of mosque and palace, the booths of merchants. There was even a camel, safely tethered.

Houriis brushed by him in the arms of sultan and of monk, of devil and policeman. Columbine smiled at him behind a mask. But his mind was upon sterner things than dancing. Another pirate spied him, approached.

"Hist!" he said. "Dost know the countersign?"

"Anything on the hip?" asked Bob promptly.

"Pass, friend! I can guide you to a beach where a Scotch galleon is careened! To a lagoon where the essence of juniper bubbles and the tail of the festive cock is waving!"

Bob took his arm. He found food, as well as drink, as he had hoped. He ate sandwiches aimlessly; felt vastly better. He jingled pieces of eight as he made his way back to the ballroom. A long time since he had dallied thus.

He might as well stay. That Columbine—

They were dancing a Paul Jones. On a dais a huge slave, a blackamoor, tooted a whistle and cried loud orders. The idea was that you danced with any girl you caught, unless some other caught you first. First come, first served, and the wallflower take the hindmost!

He pursued Columbine, lost her, cried sour grapes, and turned to a sprite who might have been Scheherazade herself. She laughed behind her veil that served as mask, as she yielded herself to him. She was like a tuft of thistledown in his arms as they danced away. A memory stabbed him; a hundred others came to its aid. He dropped his arms suddenly; stood still, staring at her with baffled eyes, while the dance still surged about them and the music still beat upon their ears.

Wide eyes were mocking him above the veil.

"It—I'm sorry, but it's not fair!" he said.

"For you to dance like that! There's only one girl in all the world who can, who's—"

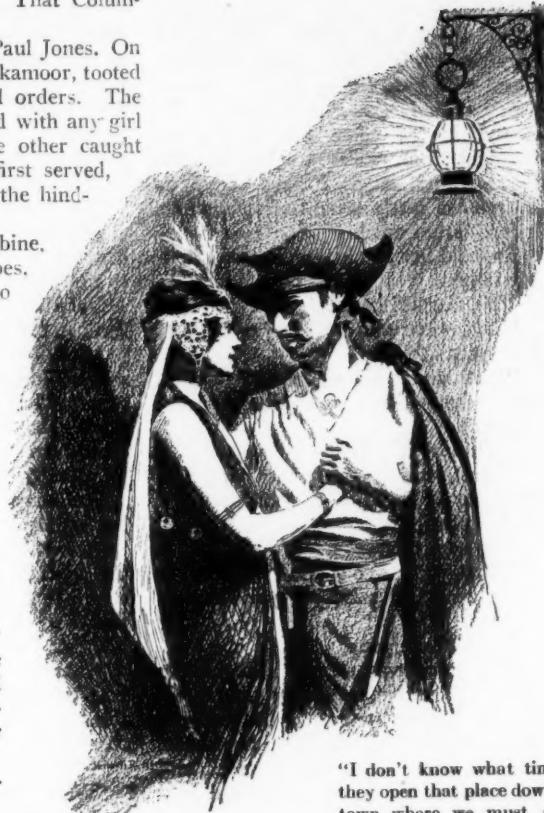
"Bob—"

He started. He had heard the echo of his name. His heart stood still, leaped. Then, incredulous, aghast, he stood and stared. She put out her hand; it touched his trembling arm.

"You!" he said. "Carol, but you're home—three thousand miles away—"

"No, please. I'm here. I really am."

Scarcely knowing what he did, he took her in his arms again. They



*"I don't know what time
they open that place down-
town where we must go
before we're married. But we'll be there."*

danced on. Only their eyes were speaking, and his must have told her all that surged through his mind. Carol—here! Carol, whose picture he had looked at, each night, just before his room was dark; Carol, who had been in San Francisco all this time, three thousand miles away, forgetting that in all the world there was any one like him! And now, his arms tightened about her, and he felt the old, nameless thrill, that was leaping through them both.

Before him, suddenly, loomed the

entrance to some corner, cunningly contrived to be half hidden. He parted rugs that made a door, looked in, drew Carol with him. They were in a room heavy with incense, mysterious in the dim light of some old lantern of wrought iron. She laughed as she faced him; laughed unsteadily, as though to mask some feeling remote, indeed, from mirth.

He held her hands; stood, thus, looking at her.

"Oh, Carol!" he said.

"Bob, you never wrote after the first few weeks."

"I couldn't! Carol. I had to wait, and then—then everything went wrong."

"What of it? Bob——"

"Carol, you know what happened. How could I write to you until I'd made good?"

Her eyes were clouded.

"Now—now—you know!" he said. "I haven't told you, but you know I love you."

"And I love you!"

Her voice was steady. Her hands were still in his, and now they drew him to her, so that their bodies were close, and suddenly she freed her hands, and her arms went about his neck, and he crushed her in his arms and held her close.

"Oh, Bob!" she said. "I prayed that you would come to-night!"

He drew away from her, laughed harshly. He thrust his hand into his pocket; held forth, for her to see, his quarter, his dime, his five pennies.

"Forty cents!" he said. "All I have in the world! And in the morning I'll be thrown out of my room. Do you know why I came here to-night? For the supper I knew there'd be?"

She laughed.

"Who cares?" she said. "Oh, Bob, who cares? Come home where we know you, and love you! Dad—any one——"

"Oh, no!" he said. His voice, his whole manner, was changed. "Carol, do you think I'd do that? I'll come home with you! I'll take you home! But, Carol, you've never stopped believing in me, have you? Even when you didn't hear?"

She was amazed.

"Of course I haven't!" she said. Her cheeks were flushed. "I—all I wondered was whether I'd just been a fool to think you cared."

Once more, and without words, his lips assured her that he cared.

"And now!" he said. "Believe in me a little longer, Carol! It's past midnight; it's a new day, Carol! I don't know what time they open that place downtown where we must go before we're married. But we'll be there."

She stared at him, puzzled, baffled, but wholly trusting.

"Look!" he said. Again he held out the coins in his hand. "What do you see? Just forty cents? Devil a bit! Pieces of eight! Did I say I'd lost my job, that I was going to be kicked out of my room? Wrong—all wrong! I'm free to make a new connection, and I'm going to move from my hall bedroom to the Ritz!"

"But, Bob——"

"Where are we?" he asked. "In New York or Bagdad? Isn't this the thousandth night? Oh, Carol! Oh, my love! Open your eyes! I've forty cents or I'm rich beyond the dreams of avarice in pieces of eight! Rich with the wealth you've given me to-night! Believe in me a little longer, Carol, and leave me free to loot this city as Morgan looted Panama! I'm not a buccaneer for nothing to-night!"

"You boy——"

"Pieces of eight!" He jingled them exultantly. "Come! You may dance, while I am gone; dance with devils and monks and harlequins, but only once with any of them! Remember that! Until I come for you. I'm going to be

busy." He looked at her. "But not so busy as I shall be after I come back to you!"

Abruptly, then, he left her. It was no time for the lesser essentials of life. He had to be about his business. Pirate's business, that, such as a man may hope to carry through once in a lifetime, and no more. Once to every man, it may be, comes opportunity as fair as that which beckoned Bob that night. It was an opportunity of the spirit, conceived, born, grown to full stature, in his own soul. Some have seized such opportunities; Napoleon, Shakespeare, Cæsar, Charlie Chaplin. Most men, confronted with such chances, seek their doctors, disturbed by the palpitations of their hearts.

Concerning his own heart in that moment Bob might well have had misgivings, had he not known so well the source of its wild beating. He walked with a full, free stride; men and hours made way for him. In his pocket jingled his pieces of eight.

He knew, as it became a buccaneer to know, in what roadstead the treasure-laden galleons lay that night. Mrs. Beresford had bidden certain men, past the age of folly, to welcome her daughter to the world and its fleshpots; their wives had seen to it that they came. But even such as these had certain rights, and stood upon them. Life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. They had donned dominoes; protesting still, had entered limousines; they had made their bows. Now, in a room apart, four of these miscreants, recreant to the dance, were engaged in a certain game of chance.

To Bob, entering like a westerly gale, they cried a welcome.

"Here's a fifth!" cried one. "Welcome, brother! Sit in, sit in!" the others echoed.

Bob frowned.

"Where are your cutlasses and boots?" he asked. "Still, you're of the

guild! I'll play with you presently. But first match doubloons to give me a stake for your game!"

He cast a coin upon the green cloth. They saw only a quarter. One matched with Bob, laughing, and won; took, next, a smaller coin. Five little disks of bronze lay still upon the table; with them, at last, Bob won. His dime came back; his quarter; soon, under his hand, a little sheaf of green paper began to grow.

They regarded him with respect now. "Give me cards!" he said at last. "You have heard of the kid that was seethed in its mother's milk? I have a wish to demonstrate that saying!"

The cards were dealt. And what, in their blindness, they called his luck still held. Luck? He was as lucky as an astronomer who, after years spent in abstruse calculations, goes to his telescope at last and sees in its appointed place the comet the world is to call by his name.

They were ready, awed, respectful, when he gave the signal for the game to cease. They stood in need of information concerning him; his name, the address to which the checks they must draw to his order to pay their debts of honor might be sent. For already all the doubloons, all the pieces of eight that room had held when he entered it were his. Not so much—a thousand, nearer two, perhaps, in their base coinage of dollars and cents, a currency in which he did not deal that night.

"You pirate!" said one respectfully.

"Call it a contribution, a fine, if you like!" said Bob. "You—Mr. Selfridge. Mr. Davenant, Mr. Carberry, Mr. Wayne! You have my name, written down there. Have you never seen it before?"

They stared at him.

"You don't remember the letters of introduction I brought to you from Henry C. Marshall and Simeon Riggs? Oh, no; of course! You were in Eu-

rope or Tuxedo or Jekyll Island! Tell me, since you've made me free of the band, why you keep up those offices you're never in?"

Carberry grinned frankly.

"Why, you know, don't you, if you tried to see us?" he said. "Did you—I begin to have misgivings—did you have any real reason for getting to us?"

"I leave it to you! Do I belong? Am I eligible? Am I a good pirate or am I not?"

"You're a malefactor of great pelf!" said Davenant, in the manner of the president of a university conferring an honorary degree. "Your ace knew three brothers when all I owned was a king full. Proceed!"

"You never had a chance to get out of this room alive until I'd told you," said Bob. "But I'll be brief. I know a way in which you can—and, incidentally, in which I can—make large sums of money. Thus——"

Briefly he outlined enough of his plan to convince them; but not enough to enable them to put it into execution without him. There might be honor among buccaneers—there might. But he wove his spell of words about them while they were still stunned by his audacity.

"Good God!" said Selfridge simply. He cast shrewd eyes upon the others, sighed, decided that he might try, at least. "Come to see me at my office in the morning, will you, Mr. Armstrong?"

The others looked upon Selfridge

with eyes full of a cold, amused contempt.

"Do that, Mr. Armstrong," said Davenant cordially. "Come to see us at Mr. Selfridge's office at eleven. We'll organize a little syndicate, of course."

"Of course," said Selfridge. "That's what I meant."

"Fourth floor, United Trust Building," said Carberry, in tones that dripped with honey. "Just bark at any one who tries to keep you out."

"To-morrow?" said Bob thoughtfully. "That's to-day. I'm sorry. I shall be busy. Make it a month from now. This day a month?"

Regretfully they nodded. And he left them. Music still filled the air of Bagdad. He came upon Scheherazade, dancing with a Mephisto, brave in his gleaming red.

"My dance!" he said.

"Go away!" The devil was annoyed.

"My dance!" repeated Bob, and fingered knife and pistol.

Ungraciously the devil yielded his prize, perhaps because she had slipped from his encircling arm.

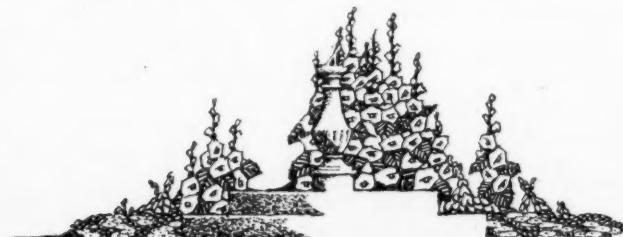
"Wait till you come down!" he said, and went away, shaking his tail.

"Bob! How——"

"I made them walk the plank!" he chanted. "I looted the treasures of the dons! But—oh, there's one thing I forgot!—to find out what time that place was open."

Her cheeks were crimson. Her whisper just reached his ear.

"Nine o'clock!" she said.





The Stone of Reconciliation

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "Stuff of Dreams," "The Big Thing," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. VICTOR HALL

Did you know that the diamond was so called by the wise men of the Renaissance? Here is the story of one such stone in the married life of Daphne Ventnor.

YOU know what the wisest men in the world called it—the diamond?" said Abraham Ventnor to Daphne, his wife, as they sat on the terrace at Bertolini's, with Naples cascading in beauty below them to the bay, bluer than sapphires, bluer than the diamond which flashed on the table between them.

"No, I don't know," said Daphne lifelessly, a little unhappily, too. She turned her eyes from the inquisition of her elderly husband's dark, half-sneering, half-amused, wholly hawklike regard toward the splendor of foliage and flower, of flashing roofs, of sun and sea-empurpled island, of Vesuvius, that day a mist upon blue air. He let his monocle fall, dangled it for a minute in the fingers of his small, sinewy, acquisitive, hawklike hand, and said, half mockingly:

"And you don't know who those wisest men in the world were, either, do you, Daphne *mia*?"

"No," said Daphne again. With a courteous effort she brought her gaze back to meet his, but she could not quite bear it, and she looked away again. This time her eyes were stayed at the table beyond theirs, where two young men, trampers through the spring world,

by their clothes and complexions, had just sat down. They were excited, exclamatory, over the incomparable radiance of the view. At the youthful enthusiasm of their delight, Daphne's pale, set little face relaxed a trifle.

"Some view, Pat, what?" said one.

"You've said it, Rick," returned the other.

Abraham Ventnor screwed his monocle into his eye again and turned to favor them with a contemptuous regard. His fingers closed over the blue-diamond pendant lying on the table between him and his wife.

"Compatriots of ours, by their cultivated vocabulary," he said, not troubling to lower or to raise his voice. Then he turned back to Daphne. "The wisest men in the world," he went on, "were the Italians of the Renaissance. They were artists in living. They claimed all beauty for their own. They seized upon power. They gratified all their passions—love lust, blood lust, beauty lust. They knew more about your charming sex, my Daphne, than all of us blatant moderns put together, with all our psychologizing. They knew you as the ministrants, drudging or delicious, to their joys, and they would never have made the foolish mistakes



At the youthful enthusiasm of their delight, Daphne's pale, set little face relaxed a trifle. "Some other. Abraham Ventnor screwed his monocle into his eye again and

about you that we in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have made. And those wise men called the diamond"—his hand removed itself from the wonderful gem between them—"the stone of reconciliation, *'la pietra della reconciliazione.'* It was the stone that brought lost harmony back into married life, the stone that brought peace to warring households, the stone that

restored love between husband and wife. May this one prove to be that between us, my dear! Will you allow me to put it on?"

He arose, a short, slight man of fifty-six or seven, and, stepping around the table, clasped about Daphne's smooth, slender neck the platinum chain on which the blue diamond hung. The stone, oblong, unusually large, carved



view, Pat, what?" said one. "You've said it, Rick," returned the turned to favor them with a contemptuous regard.

on one facet with a tiny Cupid and Psyche, gleamed like blue flame against the filmy black of her afternoon frock. She raised her eyes unhappily to his.

"It is very beautiful," she said, "and I—and I—of course, I admire it very much and I thank you for it. But—but I would rather—I would rather—" She broke off unhappily. Then she amended her ungracious intention, and

began again. "We aren't—arent' unreconciled, you know. We have had no quarrel. It was not because I was angry, or because you had done anything unkind to me, that I—that I ran away. It was because—" Again language failed her. The nuns among whom Daphne had spent so many years of her girlhood had made her shrink from inflicting an unkindness more than from almost anything in the world. They had put courtesy among the seven deadly sins, courtesy and disobedience. And how could she tell her husband, without courtesy, that she had run away from him because life with him was completely unbearable?

But if Daphne had no verbal adroitness, Abram Ventnor had plenty.

"You ran away from home, my dear," he told her, with his detached, impersonal air, "because of a mood. Moods are entirely permissible to young ladies as lovely as you. You must not distress yourself trying to find words to tell me why you had a sudden impulse to see all this beauty"—his hand negligently indicated Naples—"to see your mother, to escape the dullness of New York, where you have so few

friends, never having lived there, and where—may I not hope it?—you were a little lonely without your elderly husband?"

Daphne could not bear the dark compulsion of his gaze. But she half closed her eyes and through her colorless lips there floated a little sigh of submission. Her venture had failed. Her fate had overtaken her. That wild hope of escape from an intolerable cage which had inspired her, when Abraham had, for the first time after their marriage, left her, and which had sent her madly overseas to her mother, had been quite delusive; there was to be no escape for her. Her mother had merely cabled him to come. And here he was.

There was a noisy sound of laughter and of talk from the elevator, across the apartment, inside. She opened her eyes. She looked tragically, submissively, at the sharp-featured man opposite her. She accepted her destiny again, saying, as she gently touched the jewel:

"It is very lovely. Thank you."

The noise came onward. High-pitched American voices again drew Mr. Ventnor's forehead into a fastidious frown. A party, obviously tourist, came out upon the terrace and burst into rhapsody. Middle-aged women in tweeds, young women with graceless legs lavishly displayed, all with little, red handbooks, "Oh-ed" and "Ah-ed" over Vesuvius. They had the awed, disheveled look of sightseers on their first trip to Europe.

One of them recognized the young men at the table next to the Ventnors. She greeted them with noisy delight, and, like a good American, promptly introduced them to all the members of her party.

Ventnor looked at all of them with disgust and impatience; Daphne looked at them with wistful envy in her eyes—they looked so free, so competent! They would know what language to use

to a husband toward whom they felt as she felt toward hers. Better than that, they would never have married a husband toward whom they had such feeling! There would be no impasses in the world for them. And as for the two young men walking through from the Austrian to the Italian Tyrol and thence down to the South, with their knapsacks and their stout shoes scarred and shabby, their faces tanned—what joy to be like them! What pleasant, kind eyes the shorter one, with the glasses, had—the one whom the girl and his companion called "Pat!"

The noisy little group on the piazza had been quiet for a moment as the Ventnors had passed them on their way into the elevator. For Rick Merritt had said: "That's Abraham Ventnor and his wife," and Abraham Ventnor's was a name to cast the spell of silence over any noisy crowd. The people who did not know enough about art to be in awe of him as a connoisseur and collector generally knew enough about him as a so-called "plutocrat" to pay him the tribute of a dropped jaw and a bulging eye when he was near. For twenty-five years "Ventnor's" had stood for the most elaborate of establishments catering to every desire of the female heart as far as these desires were expressible in clothing and adornment. The establishment had, within the last six years, added an "Inc." to its name. But at least once a year the romantic story of the Russian immigrant boy who had arrived at the port of New York as nearly penniless as the immigration authorities allowed, and who had carved his way to a great fortune and a unique authority in art, was printed in at least one Sunday paper. Merritt in a few "don't-you-knows" and "don't-you-remembers" was stimulating the memory nerves of his little group of auditors.

"They're all afraid of him," he mentioned, referring to the newspapers.

"Big advertiser, of course. And so they never mention that he was Valinsky or Vodkasky, or something of that sort, when he struck Ellis Island. That's buried in the past."

"I think he's real distinguished looking," said one of the younger girls.

"I think he looks like an ugly old chicken hawk," said another, with engaging frankness. Their voices had returned to their normal pitch and were in full carrying power.

"So do I," said another. "Was he a widower when that girl married him?"

"No; a bachelor," said the omniscient Mr. Merritt.

"Who was she?" one of the elderly ladies wanted to know.

"Don't you know?" Rick was animated. "She was a Warrington, good English family. But her father was a black sheep. I sound like an awful gossip, don't I? But my mother is a perfect storehouse of information about fashionable society. I suppose I ought to be ashamed to confess it, but she's the sort of American who used to mob the bridal parties of Grace Church twenty-five years ago. She always felt very well acquainted with the Warringtons because she got closer to that wedding than to any other in high life. Dear old girl! She loves her recollections as a middle-aged athlete loves his row of silver cups. But about this girl. She's the daughter of the Honorable Eric Warrington, who was so very dishonorable. He married Calista Perkins twenty-four or five years ago. The Perkinses thought they were getting the earth. The Warringtons thought they were getting an inexhaustible gold mine. Didn't know that old man Perkins was a pocket and not a vein. He was a scandalous party, the Honorable Eric. Used to figure quite regularly as correspondent in nasty divorce cases, and went through bankruptcy as regularly as he went to Ascot. The rest of the

family were deadly respectable. They never cared much for Calista, and she never cared much for them. He died a few years ago, and she came home and stuck it out as long as she could. But the minute she had safely landed Ventnor for her daughter she beat it back to Europe. Well, I can't say that I blame her." Mr. Merritt elucidated this apparently unpatriotic statement by an admiring sweep of the hand toward the surrounding scenery.

"Isn't it awful," said one of the girls, "to think how some women will do anything for money? Why, that girl didn't look much more than a child, and yet see how she's sold herself!"

"Oh, I don't think I would say that, Miss—Miss—" The short young man, who had been absorbing his garrulous companion's information with an affectionately indulgent smile, made his first contribution to the conversation. "We don't know anything at all about her except that she's very lovely, and I'm willing to eat my hat if she is a sordid sort of girl. She couldn't be with that face."

From out the dimness behind the long windows, Daphne stepped into the brilliant light of afternoon. Her face was stained with a little, pained color. Her eyes, gray, soft, and appealing, fluttered gratefully upon her champion for an instant. She went to the table where she had been sitting and, looking beneath the edge of a plate still unremoved, found the tiny, silver-mounted set of tablets which she had left there. There was a little dismayed sigh from the girl who had been so freely expressing her opinion as Daphne passed by and was again absorbed in the interior dimness of the hotel.

The story which the vivacious Rick Merritt had outlined to his interested auditors had been quite true as far as it went. There were, of course, incidents which not even the son of such a mother would be able to supply. One



of those incidents was that, twenty-five years before, young Mr. Abraham Ventnor, then becoming known in New York as a merchant of daring methods and of exquisite taste, and already a man of means, had proposed to Miss Calista Perkins. She had rejected him with a contempt that she had been at no pains to conceal. When, a quarter of a century later, she had returned to New York a somewhat feverish widow, and had attempted to repair her youthful mistake with the internationally fa-

mous millionaire and art collector, it had been his turn to use no pains in concealing a gentle and comprehensive mirth.

And then, after one of her flittings back to Europe, she had brought home Daphne, and his collector's soul was stirred, his collector's blood was fired. The girl was utterly unlike anything in the world of girls which he had known. The charm of quiet, deep-rooted, old English gardens somehow had been bequeathed to her from her scapegrace father's people. Years in the French convent to which Calista Warrington had consigned her as a refuge at once cheap, rather chic, and altogether convenient, had developed the quality to elusiveness, shyness, and had made her beauty

as wonderful as a pearl. Abraham Ventnor had wanted her for his wife, and he had told Calista Warrington. Calista, who had not been Eric's wife for so many years without knowing all about compromise and bargain and the general griminess of life, had somehow managed to persuade herself that she was doing the best thing for Daphne when she persuaded—commanded—her to marry Ventnor. Well, anyway, she told herself, half the girls in New York would have been delighted

to be in the place that Daphne was so pathetically anxious to forgo!

And four months after their marriage, having safely left the land of her nativity again, she received a cable message from her son-in-law.

Daphne has left home. Is on *Imperator* sailing for you. Due April 26th. I will come at once or wait your advice.

She had told him to wait her advice. When Daphne had arrived she had cabled him to come at once. "A mere whim, nothing serious," she had commented. For what was a girl's loathing and shrinking and horror, her recoiling of soul and flesh, except whim? She, Calista, had known serious things, herself!

Nevertheless, despite her conviction on that subject, she didn't return to America with the reunited couple. She didn't want to see that little-girl reproachfulness in Daphne's eyes; it would soon be gone, and then she could enjoy them better! Besides, she liked Europe. And she didn't particularly care for her son-in-law, whom she had once rejected in favor of a black-guardly young gentleman of great personal charm. He reminded her of too serious an error in judgment. No, she wouldn't cross with them; but she would be over some time next winter, assuredly!

She never knew what a mistake she had made. She never realized that Abraham Ventnor, for all his innumerable ocean voyages heroically endured, was as wretched a sailor as he had been on that sickening first voyage of his, crowded in with all the odors and dirt and half the disease of southeastern Europe. Every trip still aroused all those first qualms, those spasms of utter illness. His first few days aboard a vessel were always abject. He would no more have allowed Daphne to see him than he would have thrown himself into the sea. And the last day or two before landing he was

weak, shaky, desiring no closer wooing of ocean breezes than came through the porthole of his sitting-room cabin.

So that Daphne, who was invigorated, thrilled, by the sea, had long days alone on deck. She was very shy, and the people who would have liked to thrust themselves upon her found her shyness more of a barrier than all the hauteur in the world. But one morning as she walked the deck alone, doing her two miles before breakfast, she passed and repassed a young man whose face she seemed to know, whose eyes seemed to recognize her. By the end of the day she and Patterson Hough were taking their constitutionals together. By the next day she was endlessly happy. She had found a friend. She had found some one to whom she was not afraid to talk. She had found some one who had a certain quaint, fearless, amused shyness of his own, and a divine capacity for silences, and the most comforting way of not knowing everything in the world! She liked him, she liked him! She was almost as happy as she had been that term at the convent when the nice girl from Australia had been there, and they had been friends.

"Don't you think," she said to Pat Hough, as they leaned against the rail and watched a school of porpoises flash in the late-afternoon sunlight, "that it is more beautiful to have a friend than anything else in the world?"

"Yes," he said seriously. And their honest young eyes dwelt kindly upon each other.

"I am so glad that we are to be friends," she said. "Because I heard what you said that day, at Bertolini's." But the recollection of all that day had meant clouded her face. She stopped.

"Oh, people talk such a lot of ignorant rot!" he said. "Jumping at conclusions, using canned expressions, canned ideas! Silly asses, when it's so wonderful to find out things for oneself.

It's the most wonderful thing in the world," he went on, "that; finding out things. I'm going to know all that's to be known about the fauna of the Pacific Ocean some day. You watch me. It's the most wonderful thing!" Then he looked at her face upraised in friendly excitement, and he added: "Except friendship."

"Except friendship," she echoed. And a great, comforting warmth filled their young hearts.

All of which, could she have known it, would have made Calista Warrington very sorry that she had not sailed with her daughter and her daughter's husband and the *pietra della reconciliazione*.

One morning Mrs. Ventnor called her maid. It was a year after she had tried to escape her life, and she was not quite so much the little convent girl. She was still very young looking, still very sweet and pure and serious, and she was still a little unhappy looking. But she bore herself with more composure, with a little more authority. One cannot be the wife of an Abraham Ventnor for more than a year, obliged to meet all sorts of potentates, and have them kowtow to one, without gaining a trifle of aplomb. Now she was able to summon her maid without blushing and apologizing because it was so dreadful to ask an older woman to do things for her which she was perfectly able to do for herself. To-day she looked a little serious. The maid looked a little furtive as they met each other's eyes in the mirror in front of which Daphne was sitting.

"Reba," said she, "I do not find my blue diamond here." She had her jewel case open before her.

Reba almost shrugged her shoulders, not quite. She had never transgressed utterly, although she gave Daphne subtly to understand that she was Mr. Ventnor's employee, not Mrs. Vent-

nor's. But her eyes turned away from Daphne's in the mirror.

"Madame must have put it somewhere else."

"Didn't you take it off me?"

"Yes, madame. I did, now that you remind me. And I dropped it there. Pardon me, madame, and I will look." She lifted out trays lined with soft suede. She shook living sparks upon the air. But the blue-diamond pendant was not there.

"No one else has been in the room except you and me, Reba, since I came home last night?"

"No, madame. Assuredly not."

"You slept all night in the little room?"

"Certainly, madame. Does not monsieur order that it shall always be so when he is away from home, so that madame may not have to wait a minute if there is anything that she desires?"

"Then, Reba, where is the pendant?" Daphne interrupted the speech. She hated it as she hated the thing it recorded—Abraham Ventnor's disposition to treat her as a man of the East might treat an inmate of his harem, always leaving guards, spies, on watch.

Reba shrugged her shoulders, and again she did not meet Daphne's eyes. By and by the girl spoke gently:

"You know, Reba, there was the topaz necklace. And the ruby ring. It—it can't possibly go on. You—you must try to think how my jewels have disappeared and how they may be recovered. The topazes were not valuable ones, and the ruby—well! But the blue diamond is something that—that Mr. Ventnor likes to have me wear. He—Reba, you will have to find it. Reba, I am sorry. I—I know about your son. But—"

Reba looked at her defiantly. She spoke insolently.

"You've got the copy," she said.

"The copy?"

"Of the blue diamond. The one you had made to wear at that Persian pageant. I've heard people say you couldn't tell the difference; that it was a wonderful thing."

"Reba!" cried Daphne. Then she commanded herself. "Are you actually asking me," she said, "to—to be a party to thefts on your part? I know, of course, why you have to raise so much money at this time. I—your son—oh, I have been sorry for you, Reba! And you promised to bring the ring back as soon as his trial was over. And—but I can't let it go on. I must tell Mr. Ventnor."

"You aren't always so careful about what you tell him," said the woman, dropping the servility of the maid and showing insolence undisguised. "You may keep some things from him. You keep from him that you have been seeing that young man with big books on animals, that young man he told you a year ago—"

"Oh!" Daphne broke in with a cry of dismay. The dismay

was all for the ugliness of the soul that was exposing itself to her stricken gaze. She had had a sort of passionate pity for the mother of the son who was being tried, with two other young gunmen, for a dreadful police murder. She had been so sorry for Reba that she had borne with her patiently and had not yielded to the impulse to hate her because she was the ministrant and guard placed over her without her consent. But now the woman was showing herself a black-



Hannah Flaherty, conscious of a disturbance behind her, turned. Upon a chain around her fat neck blazed Abraham Ventnor's blue diamond.

maier as well as a thief. Daphne did not use those words. She only knew that there was more ugliness and degradation in the world than she could bear the sight of.

As for Patterson Hough, it had been true that her husband had at first jeered at the acquaintance, and then had forbidden any increase of friendliness between them. But he had not seemed jealous. He had seemed merely bored and superior. Hough was the sort of person he didn't want on his list. The world was full of nonentities, and the advantage of great fortune was that one didn't have to know them. One could choose one's friends. Shyly she had spoken of science, and he had laughed at her. The scientist of a fresh-water college, he had intimated, wasn't a man for Abraham Ventnor's acquaintance, and consequently much less for the acquaintance of Abraham Ventnor's wife. He had been firm, sneeringly firm, about it. But it hadn't mattered, because Pat had been going off on a year of Pacific exploration. And although she had told him that he could not write to her, she had told it with such shining, friendly eyes that somehow she was sure she had not hurt his feelings, and their friendship had still lived. And now he was in New York again for just a few days; he had been to Washington to report something quite wonderful to the Smithsonian Institution. He was going to be famous, worthy the collection of Abraham Ventnor. She had told herself that when she had received him, in defiance of the old command. And, oh, how good, how good, it had been to see him again! How they had laughed brokenly into each other's eyes, and then had fallen silent, looking, asking, answering. And the answer had been good. They were still friends. The best thing in the world was still theirs.

And now this unspeakable woman dared to say that she would—what?

Tell of Patterson Hough's calls, the two of them? Tell of last night, when she, Daphne, had left Mrs. Robinson's party early? It was true. It had been indiscreet, of course. And they had driven in the park, in the spring warmth. But it had been so beautiful! She had felt so full of gentle rejoicing. And now this woman wanted her to pay for that drive in such a sordid way. It could not be done.

She remembered that he was coming to see her again this evening. Well, what of it? She would tell her husband herself. She had nothing to conceal, nothing of which to be ashamed. She would tell him that she was not a child, that she could not be treated as one, that she must be allowed her friends, her associates. She thought of the stalwart, fearless American girls whom she had seen in Italy that day a year before. She had a great, thrilling wave of admiration for them.

She did not tell Abraham Ventnor about Patterson Hough. She did not tell him about Reba's depredations. For Patterson Hough had looked at her that night out of his honest, good, young eyes, and had told her that he loved her and that friendship was only a part of love. And that he was never going to see her again. And that she was a shining lily, and a white star, and the hidden brook in his heart.

And she had wept with sudden anguish and had said that he must not, must not, go away from her. And they had kissed—a cold, tremulous, young, little kiss, innocent as the dew, sweet as the first bird-call in the morning.

But now she could never look at Abraham with those clear eyes or say to him those self-respecting words. For Patterson loved her, loved her, a married woman! And she, a married woman, loved him! And she was glad of it, glad, though she would be heartbroken forever.

And Reba! What did she know? Not that anything mattered. But what had been right was now not so right. She could not tell Abraham.

He had been insisting all the week, her husband, that she wear the blue diamond. She had evaded the request. She was always wearing the wrong clothes; she was having the clasp mended. He would telephone Tiffany's and have the job hurried, he said. And then, feeling unclean, disgraced, she had said that she would drive down and get it.

That night he had brought a guest who claimed to have discovered wonderful new talent, "worthy your attention, my dear Mr. Ventnor," in an East Side vaudeville house. He descended upon the Russian singer, the charm, the melancholy, the soaring purity of her voice. They would go down and hear her, Ventnor decreed. Daphne was wearing the imitation blue diamond. He had practically commanded her to wear it. He had looked at her sharply when she had come down with it on, but he had seemed pleased to see it again. She had experienced the sensation of falling a league through dizzy space when he looked at the make-believe thing. But he had given no sign, no sign at all, of guessing.

She had shivered a little, and Ventnor had rung for a servant to bring her a scarf. She had tried to hide her trinket in the sleek black sur. But he had parted it upon her breast and had called the guest's attention to it. He had told the man the medieval name for it, the legend.

And then they had gone to the vaudeville house. She had tried to leave it off, her *pietra della reconciliazione*, but he had actually sent up to her room for it, and had reclasped it about her throat.

The singing had been very good. Many people had been going to hear it at the little theater, dirty, out of the way, and noisome as it was. There was

a fat woman, with greasy hair and a creased, unclean-looking neck, in the row in front of them. She wore wonderful earrings, and a décolleté gown of wonderful black lace. In the fold of flesh at the back of her neck a chain lost itself. Once Daphne had a glimpse of its clasps and her heart stood quite still for a second.

"That fat old girl in front of Mrs. Ventnor," whispered the cicerone, "is Hannah Flaherty, the famous old fence. You've heard of her, of course? The best-known receiver of stolen goods in the city. Queer old character; owns half Harlem, they say. She's wearing lots of loot now, isn't she? Some sparklers in her ears. What is the matter, Mrs. Ventnor?"

"It's close. I feel faint," Daphne managed to say. She had already half risen. She swayed. The men helped her. The people looked at her sympathetically. Hannah Flaherty, conscious of a disturbance behind her, turned. Upon a chain around her fat neck blazed Abraham Ventnor's blue diamond, *pietra della reconciliazione*.

The small part of the world which heard the story always said that Ventnor's stroke was the result of sheer chagrin. He had pretended to ultimate taste, to ultimate knowledge in the arts of beauty. And his wife had been wearing glass and he had not known it, while a loathsome old receiver of stolen goods had blazed with his famous pendant!

He lingered, to Daphne's joy, for two years. She was able to expiate some of the sin, beneath which she felt herself bowed, by unremitting service, unfailing patience. She was ecstatically happy to be allowed to do penance to the utmost.

But to-day, as Mrs. Patterson Hough, she wears not a jewel, not a brooch nor a chain. Only her wedding ring—and stars in her eyes.



Homecoming

By Reginald Wright Kauffman

CAN you best love your country
Who never left her shore
To tap with glad effront'ry
Outside her farthest door?

Or you, whose lives are finer,
Too gentle for the sea,
Who cross on some large liner,
All lights and luxury?

I think our land is dearest
By fresh comparison,
And that our shores are nearest
The heart when hardly won.

To hail from foreign places,
The deck hand on a tramp,
With months among strange races;
To sail in cold and damp

Through seas no power will flatten
For weeks, and then esp'y
The towers of white Manhattan
Combing the western sky,

And so, each trip surprising,
To greet, unaltered, bright,
Glad and uncompromising,
The Goddess and her Light—

Oh, that's to know and love her
And vow no more to roam;
To learn, to rediscover
Your country and your home!



What They Knew About Themselves

BURTON was wishing, as he went toward Peppino's, that Charlotte had not made a point of his meeting her for luncheon to-day. He wasn't in a mood for Char's sisterly kind, sisterly keen, gray eyes. He could not, of course, see her and fail to tell her at once that he was engaged to marry Georgine French; Char must be the first person—of course, of course!—to learn that interesting fact. But he felt that he would have been able to make out a prettier case for it by evening. In front of Charlotte's wood fire, with the light adjusted so that it left his face in shadow, he could have made a prettier story of it. However, he was in for it now! Since she had summoned

By
Virginia
Middleton

ILLUSTRATION BY
S. B. ASPELL

him to lunch with her, he would have to tell her at once. After all, there was nothing to be ashamed of in the fact that he was going to marry Georgine! It isn't a disgrace to fall in love with a girl with millions.

"But have you fallen in love with her, Johnny?" In imagination he could hear Charlotte's cool, tolerant, amused voice.

Oh, well, hang it! He wasn't in love with any one else. And he liked to make love to Georgine, badly duennaed little siren that she was! He wasn't a fool, of course; he didn't think that a liking for a girl's kisses was a substantial basis for an old-fashioned domestic career. But he and Georgine

were not likely to go in for old-fashioned domesticity. And she was a good little scout at bottom. And the millions—it would be rather a lark to use some of them in promoting *The Battle Ax*, the weekly which was one day to make capitalism fall in splinters, but which, meantime, was itself dying by inches. Thank Heaven he had never made love to Charlotte! Although, even if he had, Charlotte was a modern, too. She understood her world, and she understood him. No one had ever understood quite like Charlotte.

He needn't be funereal about it, however. Marrying Georgine was not going to cut Charlotte out of his life, out of their lives. Georgine liked Charlotte. Probably she could do something for her, could have her meet all the right people, people with babies and gardens and pet dogs and things that they would want to have photographed as no one on earth could photograph them except Charlotte.

He dived down the three or four steps and plunged into the onion-scented, damp darkness of Peppino's basement entrance. He went through the hall and out into the back yard, its high brick walls covered with startling views of Vesuvius in crimson and black eruption over the blue Bay of Naples, of poppies growing scarlet among the ruins in the Campagna, and the like. Charlotte was waiting at the table against the green box of ivy.

"Johnny, you were a good boy to come when called," she told him as he pulled out his chair. "I was afraid that you might be in the middle of an editorial on the entire righteousness of sabotage, or something of that sort. And I had to see you. Even if it had meant that capitalism kept its clutch upon our throats for another æon or two, I had to see you at once. I've ordered."

"What's the rush?" asked Burton. "Have you just heard that you are the

rightful heir, or something of that sort? What is it that couldn't keep until evening? Not," he added politely—a little too politely—"that I'm not delighted to come. Capitalism—I wasn't doing much against it to-day."

"The reason it couldn't wait until evening, John," said Charlotte, and now he noticed that her face was brilliantly pale, and that there was something a trifle set about her smile, "is because you aren't coming to my house this evening."

"Oh, I'm not coming? Well, that's all right. Had a bid to something more exciting than a call from me?"

"Johnny," she began, and broke off. Hesitations and abruptnesses were utterly unlike her. He stared. He forgot Georgine.

"Is anything the matter, Charlotte?"

"No. Yes. Something absurd. You see, John, Mr. Simpson—Augustus—Augustus thinks that you and I have been—have been too conspicuously often in each other's company."

"And what the dickens has that old dodo Simpson to do with it?" Burton was angry.

"Well, I am going to marry the old dodo, John. And I admit that it is a quaint point of view, but he is old-fashioned. He doesn't want me to see so much of you."

"Marry Simpson!" All the blood in John Burton's body was suddenly in his head, pounding at his ears. He was violently angry. He was speechlessly angry.

"Yes. You know that I have always liked him very much, admired him very much."

"He's old enough to be your grandfather," cried John, achieving speech by an effort.

"No. My father, possibly. He's only fifty, Johnny. And I'm twenty-eight, as you know very well."

"Do you mind telling me," again Burton dragged the words out by main

strength, "why you are marrying him? You — you — Charlotte — Charlotte Brand!"

"I suppose I'm marrying him because he caught me in a very tired moment, Johnny. I have them, you know. Indeed, they've been becoming tired hours, days, weeks. I've been grinding since I was eighteen. I'm tired to death of it."

"Charlotte Brand, marrying for a home!" he laughed harshly.

"You aren't taking it very prettily, John," she told him, coloring. "After all, you have no right. You and I——"

"If I were your brother in fact, as I am your brother in love," he told her hotly, "I'd—I'd forbid the banns. You and that desiccated old fossil, who hasn't even kept up with his own times, much less seen any new time coming! That—money bags, of course. And Charlotte is going to marry him."

Her eyes were lowered. He suddenly divined tears smarting behind her eyelids. He leaned across the table toward her.

"Don't cry, don't cry. Char. I'm a beast. I'm a brute. But it hurts me so unendurably. I'm hitting out at you because—because you've struck me such a blow."

She raised her eyes, and he saw that he had been right. They were wet.

"You've been struck a blow? You, Johnny?" She was unbelieving.

"You know I—why, of course you must know it. I'm in love with you. Always have been. Haven't had a day since I first met you, seven years ago, when you weren't at the bottom of my thoughts, my heart. Look here, Char, you're not going to marry that fellow. You're going to marry me!"

"John! You aren't in love with me. You've never said——"

"Oh, I'm a dumb fool, dumb and blind. I'm a defective, a moron. But I know now. You can't marry him.

You don't love him; you know you don't."

"I—I—I like him very much. And it's a long time since I thought that romantic love was a good foundation for a happy marriage, a necessary foundation, that is. No, Johnny. Oh, I do like you, my dear, and we do have the most wonderful times together, and it is going to hurt abominably to stop playing around with you, but playtime's over, boy! I'm going to marry him."

"Over my dead body, you may," he told her melodramatically. Then he suddenly recalled a fact. "Jumping Jehoshaphat!" he cried. He ran his fingers wildly through his thick, dark hair. "Forgive me, Char. Forgive me. I was forgetting something. I was forgetting, in the shock of your announcement, that I—I'm going to be married myself."

"You?" she said incredulously. "You? Why—who——"

"Georgine French," he replied lugubriously. Charlotte flamed.

"That little imitation vamp? For Heaven's sake, John, talk sense!"

"It's the truth."

"You're not in love with her. You couldn't be. You have brains and some taste. And she isn't in love with you. She hasn't anything to be in love with anybody with!"

"Well, we haven't said that our marriage would be made in heaven. But we thought we could jog—or shimmy—along for a while together. The French tradition, you remember, doesn't include complete antipathy to divorce."

"John, how base!"

Wrath had dried all tears from her eyes. They looked at each other across the table.

"What you and I have for each other," she went on, suddenly shaken again, "may not be enough to marry on—just affection, trust, comradeship. But to marry without them! Oh, John! It is base—base."

"You can save me from it; you can save me from that baseness. I can save you from it. Charlotte, will you?"

She looked toward him waveringly. His eyes were miserable, entreating, adoring. A light sprang to her own.

"Johnny," she breathed, "is it true?"

"That we love each other? Of course it is. Of course it always has been. Oh, my dear! My dear! What blind bats we have been! What haven't we failed to know about ourselves!"

"Rather cool!" commented Miss

Georgine French when she had digested the contents of an incoherent but fairly explicit note brought by messenger from city hall. "Rather cool! Married! But I didn't guess she had so much sporting blood. Grabbed him from under my very fingers! Why didn't they find it out earlier?"

"Conscienceless, conscienceless!" said Mr. Augustus Simpson, when he also had digested the contents of a similar communication from the same spot. "Vulgar, too. I'm well out of it. But why didn't they find it out earlier?"



TURN BACK THE PAGES

TURN back the pages, let me read again
The dear, departed dreams of yesterday.
Too much of strife is here, too much of pain;
Words that I fear to speak are mine to say,
Swift words and cruel, that fall not easily
From lips accustomed to the touch of love.
Turn back the pages—turn, and let me see
The hope, the joy I once was author of.

Here is the day our first shy vows were made,
The words you spoke, the promise that was mine;
And here the first caress your young lips laid
Upon my own. Oh, read no further line!
Can we forget the wonder of that kiss,
Or write of pain, who have known joy like this?

HELEN FRAZEE-BOWER.



One Hundred Thousand Dollars

By Carl Glick

Author of "Words, Just Words," "An Evening at Home," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOSEPH WYCKOFF

A lively story concerning an actress out of work and a hundred thousand dollars which were suddenly thrust into her hands.

If you know anything at all about multimillionaires, you are, of course, aware of the fact that they are very careless when it comes to handling large amounts of money. Bank clerks in the financial district run back and forth with small fortunes in black leather bags. Clerks in Wall Street go from office to office carrying in their inside pockets next to last week's love letters, the price of an apartment or a trip to Brazil. And they think nothing of it. They might just as well be fingering little green slips of paper engraved with numbers and nursery rhymes.

Perhaps that was the reason why J. L. Clarkson, one of our very biggest multis, called into his office one morning at about ten-thirty, Frank Blaine, a young clerk, whom he thought he could trust. He gave into his hands a small package tied with a piece of common white string, and directed him to deliver this package to an uptown address.

Blaine, thanks to his "Carry-the-Message-to-Garcia" training, asked no questions. But he knew what the package contained: one hundred one-thousand-dollar bills. He thrust the money into his pocket and left the office whistling.

All this was in the ordinary course of

business, and it failed to cause any excitement, flurry, or even gossip among the office force. However, as soon as Blaine had gone, a thin, pinched-cheeked, shifty-eyed clerk, who doesn't come into our story again, by a pre-arranged signal, let two men hanging around the corner of the big office building know that the money had started on its journey. No one else gave the matter a second thought.

But the two men felt certain that the money was already as good as theirs. All they had to do would be pick it off of Blaine. He was a nice kid, they granted that, but somewhat chicken-hearted.

That same morning at that same hour, everything was quiet in a theatrical rooming house up in the Times Square district. Actors do not, as a rule, get out of bed much before noon.

But the dollar alarm clock on Sylvia's dresser buzzed insistently. It was one of those unfortunate clocks that keeps on ringing until you get up and turn it off. That was why Sylvia had placed it so far out of reach on the dresser.

She turned over in bed. Groaned. It was so hard to be roused from pleasant dreams and sleep, where troubles are for a time forgotten, to face again the hard realities of life. If only the dreams would last!



The alarm clock kept on buzzing.

Yesterday had been long and disappointing. Sylvia had gone from manager to manager, agent to agent, seeking an engagement. But every place she went, save one, where she was told to come back the next day, there was word that no casting was being done. It had been a rotten day. She hadn't even gotten an invitation to dinner.

The alarm clock kept on buzzing.

But perhaps to-day something would happen. It had to. All she had left was twenty-five cents, seven pawn tickets, and a fur coat. However, this was one of her big days. Once she had had her horoscope read, and the astrologer had told her that the eighth, sixteenth, and twenty-fourth of every month would be her lucky days. This was the sixteenth.

The alarm clock kept on buzzing.

"Oh, darn that thing!" she exclaimed.

"Well, you see I'm an actress, and I've got to watch my money. Gowns and hats cost so much nowadays. Suppose you're an author. A playwright? I'm looking for a play."

So she made a supreme effort, got up, shut off the clock, closed the window, pulled down the shade, and was ready for her morning's exercise. Sylvia was trying to reduce. An actor, who had been in the army, had told her of the benefits to be derived from five minutes' violent setting-up exercises every day. Sylvia was especially interested in the bending-over agonies. She weighed— But then, that is her secret.

And she wasn't quite certain just what the last report had been. She did not dare try the scales in the subways. They all lied, and contradicted one another, anyway.

"After all," she thought to herself, "better stay as I am than suffer so much physically. A fat goil don't get much sympathy, but she does get a lot of attention. And that's what an actress needs. Publicity!"

The exercises over, Sylvia dressed. She put on her best clothes. But she looked them over carefully first to see if there were any places where the worn spots were beginning to show. A

good shine to her shoes would make them look almost like new. She rouged her cheeks a trifle. And then she smiled at herself in the mirror. Not that she was of the glad, Pollyanna temperament, but because a smile usually keeps away wrinkles. As a final touch of triumph, she put on her fur coat. If worst came to worst, she would have to pawn it, together with the rest of her things. But for a while yet, she could wear it, a day at least, and still feel grand.

She counted her change. It was no different from last night.

"Two bits," she said. "And me that ain't a socialist."

It was almost as if she had expected the twenty-five cents, by some magic process, to have grown to larger proportions during the night.

Her plan for the day was the usual routine. She would go first to Rosenberg & Cohn, who were putting out a new musical show. They had told her yesterday to come back to-morrow, and to Sylvia a promise was a promise. Then, after that, the rounds.

Out in the hall she met her landlady. Sylvia could do this all right. She didn't have to sneak in and out. The good woman was paid up until the first of the month. And so Sylvia, thank Heaven, had one person to whom she could speak freely.

"Going out, Miss La Reine?" said Mrs. Mumford.

"You bet. I suppose I ought to stay home and let 'em send for me. But then it's so much better to let 'em take a look at you, and know you are in town. The bird in the hand always gets the job, you know. Although, I will say that for one of my talents and reputation in the business, I'm always in demand. I've only to tell 'em who I am, and I get my chance at the prima donna rôle."

"Oh, then you aren't doing chorus work any more?"

Sylvia did not blink, although she wanted to tell Mrs. Mumford what she thought of her tactless remark.

"Chorus work? Me? Well, maybe on the road. But not in New York. It's the lead for me or nothing. And they all know it. If I could only get the right kind of a part, I'd draw big. You seem dressed for the street, too."

"Going to the bank."

"My, ain't you grand, though! I had a bank account once, but it was such hard work tracing my checks that I had to give it up. I'm not much of a business woman, although I will say I could learn if pressed to it."

"It's these bond robberies that's worrying me. You're lucky not to have an account."

"Robberies?"

"Yes. Right in the streets. In daytime, too. A terrible crime wave is sweeping the country, Miss La Reine."

"So I've heard, replied Sylvia, "but I don't seem to be able to get in on it."

Mrs. Mumford filled Sylvia's ears with the current gossip concerning the outrages going on in and around Wall Street.

"I'm a working woman, I am, Miss La Reine. And got to protect my interests. The Seventh National Bank has lost some half-million dollars in bonds and money. And I'm going to change my account. What if they should close their doors? And me, without a cent in the world. I try hard to be a good trusting member of society, but I'm going right down and put my seven hundred dollars some place else."

"I don't blame you none."

"Yes," continued Mrs. Mumford. "There's been murders done, too, and kidnaping."

"I suppose the newspapers got to have something to write about," said Sylvia, "although I don't believe half of what I read in print. When you're in the show business, you don't dare."

As for murders, I'd like to see anybody murder me for my money. I'd sue 'em for damages, sure."

She touched the twenty-five cents in her pocket. And then started out.

She made her way toward Broadway. The wind was blowing vigorously. Sylvia thanked fortune for her fur coat. Breakfast! That was the first thing. A cup of coffee would brighten her up. She made her way into one of those doughnut lunch counters.

Sylvia was not conventional. She scorned the tables. And so she climbed upon a stool at the counter. It saved a tip, anyway.

"A cup of good, strong coffee, dearie," she said to the waiter. "Plenty of sugar. I'm not trying to reduce. Sure. Thanks." And Sylvia beamed.

She was suddenly startled by a young man slipping into the seat next to her. He seemed as if he were trying to hide between her and the door. He rather crouched down, and seemed to think Sylvia's size furnished a protection.

Sylvia looked him over. He had a pleasant face, clean-shaven, blue eyes, and boyish lips. She wondered if he was a playwright, he seemed so frightened.

If so, she might possibly get some sort of a part through him. So she put on her best manner, and stirred her coffee with the air of a society melodramatic actress.

"They tell me," she said, "that these joints are taking the place of bars. But coffee houses will never have the same atmosphere of the family entrance. And think of the doughnuts you'd have to eat before you could get a bun on. Ain't that so?"

"Why, yes," he said, giving her a startled look.

"Worried?" said Sylvia, noticing his frown. "We all have our troubles. I'm worried over something, too. These here bond robberies have me scared to death. I think I'll change my account

at the bank. Think there's any danger of the banks failing?"

"Hardly! Why do you ask me?"

"Well, you see I'm an actress, and I've got to watch my money. Gowns and hats cost so much nowadays. Suppose you're an author. A playwright? I'm looking for a play."

"No—no."

"What makes you so nervous?" she asked, observing his glances toward the door. "I know it's unconventional, speaking to people you ain't ever been introduced to. But I'm good-natured, and people usually see I'm the sort they can tell their troubles to and trust. Even though I have enough troubles of my own. Gawd knows. What's on your mind?"

"I'm afraid I'm being followed," he said.

"Followed?" Sylvia laughed. "Don't worry me none when I'm followed. I know how to handle 'em. Treat 'em sternlike. That's the way."

"See here," the young man said suddenly. "I believe I can trust you."

"Most people can," replied Sylvia. "But there ain't many men, I'll trust. Not when they're past thirty. But you're just a kid."

There was something so kind, so motherly in her face, that she invariably won confidence.

"I'm delivering some money to a bank, and think I'm being followed."

"You don't say! Robbers?"

"I think so."

He started. Two men passed the window, and peered in.

"There they are now," he said. "They've been every place I've gone this morning. I came in here hoping to shake them."

Sylvia had one of her mad impulses.

"Listen," she said. "I've got an idea. Give me the money. Gee, that's a swell line for a play. You slip out the side door. Let them see you go. Give them the razz, and come back

here in five minutes. If they catch you, they'll see you haven't the papers on you. When you come back, I'll hand 'em over to you. What?"

The two men entered the door.

"All right," said the young man. "I'll go out the front way, and come in the back door. Give them the impression I haven't a thing with me."

He slipped into her hands a small package tied with a piece of common white string. Sylvia dropped it into the pocket of her coat. The boy rose, picked up his check, went to the cashier's desk, paid his bill, and walked nonchalantly out. The two men turned and followed him.

Sylvia caught her breath. She stirred her coffee, and prepared to wait for five minutes.

The five minutes passed. Ten. But the boy did not come back.

Sylvia did not know that, once outside the door, the two men started after the youth, walking very fast. Nor did she observe the little scene enacted on the side street: two men, suddenly seizing a third by the arm, hustling him in a hurry and against his will into a waiting taxi, and the taxi moving rapidly away.

Sylvia did not know that this had happened. So she sat and waited, trembling with expectancy. After all it warmed her heart to help any one out. And surely this was something of a thrill.

Fifteen minutes passed. Still he did not return.

Sylvia began to be worried. What if something had happened to him?

The waiter eyed her suspiciously.

"Going to stay here all day?" he questioned.

"Don't get fresh," replied Sylvia. "I can't stand hot coffee. Anyway, I'm going to pay for it."

Fifteen minutes more flew by. Sylvia came to the conclusion that

something had happened to the young man, and that she had better start out in search of him. The waiter was eying her with more than distrust, so Sylvia arose. She would wait outside. She paid the cashier.

Twenty cents left.

Perhaps the best thing would be to deliver the package herself. She looked up and down the street. The crowds hurried by, paying no attention to anything but their own affairs.

She looked at the package. There was no address on it. She stepped into the entrance of a building. She untied the string. Sylvia's eyes bulged. The blow was too much. She felt weak. Afraid that her confusion would be seen, she thrust the bundle of bank notes into her pocket.

Then she drew them out again. Yes, she had seen aright. She was actually holding in her hand a number of one-thousand-dollar bills!

The doorman hurried to her.

"Faint?" he said.

"Be all right in minute," Sylvia replied. But she knew that her voice sounded thin and weak.

What would she do? Was the man a thief? And had he passed the money to her, hoping to throw off the detectives? Surely those two who were following him were detectives! What if she should be found? And searched? Jail, surely! She remembered what Mrs. Mumford had told her. Robberies. The crime wave! Murders!

"My Gawd!" she thought. "Why should this happen to me? And I was just trying to help somebody."

She took the package out of her pocket again, and looked it over carefully. Suddenly, to her joy, she discovered an address and a name printed on the inside of the wrapper.

J. L. Clarkson & Co., 2 Wall Street.

She hurried to a telephone booth. She would call up Mr. Clarkson.

But first, safely inside the booth, she counted the bills. There were one hundred in all. And Sylvia realized that she was holding in her hand one hundred thousand dollars. She leaned weakly against the side of the booth.

But she reached for a nickel in her pocket, and came back to earth. After the usual delay she succeeded in getting her number.

"Hello," she said, "is Mr. J. L. Clarkson in?"

"Who is it speaking?" came her reply.

"Miss La Reine. Sylvia La Reine!"

"Have you an appointment?"

"No. But I've got to see him."

"He sees nobody except on appointment."

"Just like the show business. Well, it's important."

"That's what fifty people a day say."

"You're a fresh one," retorted Sylvia.

"I beg your pardon?"

"Who is this speaking?" she asked.

"The secretary to his secretary."

"Well, I ain't quarreling with you."

"What did you wish to see him about?" the secretary to the secretary asked.

"I ain't telling nobody but Mr. Clarkson himself. Where is he?"

"Out to lunch. Will you leave a message?"

"No. I'll come down myself. I don't trust what I've got to tell him to nobody."

She hung up the receiver. One hundred thousand dollars in her pocket. And fifteen cents in actual change!

"My Gawd!" she said aloud. "Wouldn't this make swell publicity?" But what if the young fellow was a thief? And what if she, too, would be implicated? It would almost ruin her reputation with future companies she might be with. How catty some of the girls might be if they knew she had been mixed up in an affair of this sort!

They wouldn't trust her, and she would find it very difficult to borrow.

But Clarkson was out to lunch. Well, she had time to go to the office and see if Rosenberg & Cohn had anything definite to offer.

The waiting room was crowded. Sylvia's heart sank. Would she have any chance against such an array of youth and fair good looks as this?

But she felt somewhat independent. Her head was high. Hadn't she a right to be a little bit upstage as long as she was carrying one hundred thousand dollars in her pocket? She felt that she could even talk back to Sol Rosenberg himself. And so, clutching the bills, with a smile on her lips, and the air of a queen, she told the office girl that she wanted to see Mr. Rosenberg.

"Have you an appointment?"

"Sure. He told me to come back to-day. Can't wait long. Got an appointment with J. L. Clarkson."

Sylvia was surprised at her boldness. She knew that his name was one to strike fear into the populace. And it had the expected effect. The office girl stared and was immediately humble.

"I'll ask him if he'll see you," said the girl, as she walked away.

Sylvia turned and looked around with a grand manner. She had never felt so important in her life.

In a few moments the girl returned.

"He's busy right now," she said. "But he says if you'll wait he'll see you in about five minutes."

"Are his minutes long?"

"No."

"Well, I'll wait."

She started for a vacant chair. Some one touched her on the sleeve, and a voice spoke in her ear.

"Why, Sylvia, is it you?"

"Goldie!" exclaimed Sylvia. "You old dear. What's the matter? 'The Giddy Whirl' close?"

"Yes. Oh, yes, Sylvia!" From the

way Goldie said this, Sylvia knew that all was not well.

Goldie had been in Sylvia's company the year before. She was a frail, pretty little thing, but always somewhat dependent upon others. And Sylvia had taken her under her wing more than once. Goldie had a husband; or, rather, she had had one once. He was an actor. And Goldie had married him one season when they were together in order to save hotel bills. But he vanished the next season; presumably he had another engagement. Goldie had never heard from him, and the support of their little daughter, Vera, had fallen entirely upon her.

"Come over here, dearie," said Sylvia. "What's the trouble? I'm the original little gloom chaser. What's wrong?"

"Everything. I can't get work. And Vera's sick." There were white lines about her mouth. "I ought to be home

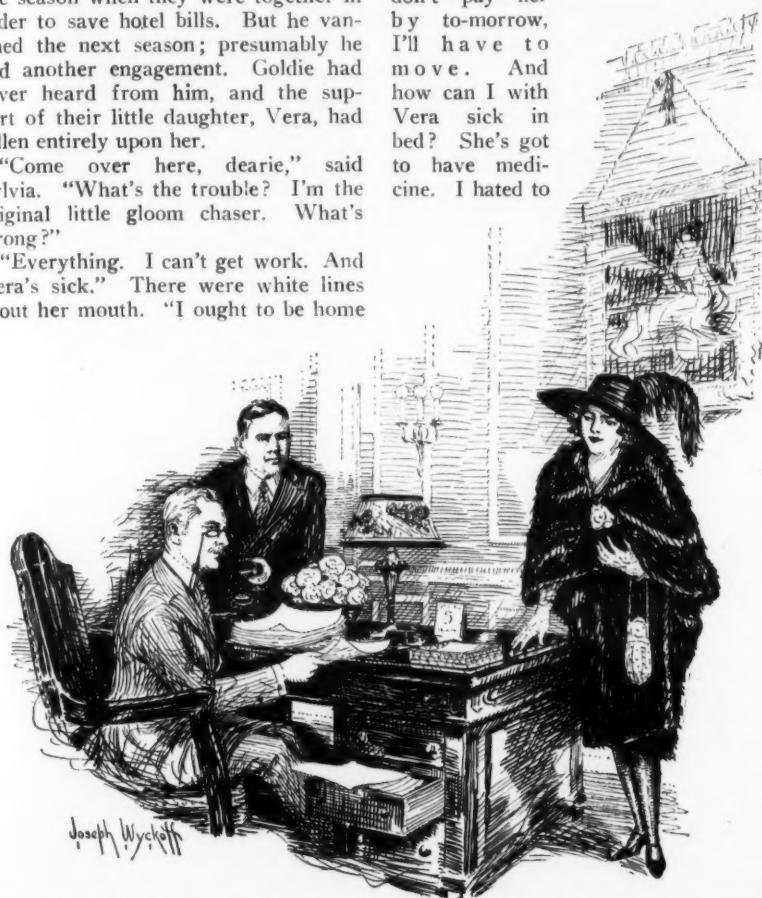
with her now. And I'm almost broke, Sylvia. I've only two dollars left. And I haven't been able to pay the room rent."

"Two dollars!" replied Sylvia. "You're rich." She touched the bills in her pocket. "I have half a notion to be a socialist!"

"What?"

"Just my way of making a joke."

"Well, the landlady says that if I don't pay her by to-morrow, I'll have to move. And how can I with Vera sick in bed? She's got to have medicine. I hated to



"Well," said Sylvia, unaware of the fact that she was on the point of being removed by force, "did you lose one hundred thousand dollars?"

leave her to come here. Seeing if I can't get in the chorus of their new show." Tears came into her eyes. "Sylvia, something's got to happen soon. I—I've almost——"

Stern lines came around Sylvia's mouth.

"Don't do that, Goldie. Don't ever do that! I'm somewhat on the rocks myself. But, dearie, you know they can't down me. There's always a way out of everything. Listen, if you lost something, and somebody returned it to you, you'd give them a reward wouldn't you?"

"Why, yes; if I had anything to give."

"Well, I didn't think I'd ask a reward at first. It's all my fault. But I'm going to now. I'm going to go. See you later, dearie. And when I do, I'll have good news for you."

"Going? But Rosenberg said he would see you."

Sylvia put on her most independent air.

"Oh, dearie," she replied, "he can wait! He'll think a lot more of me. I'll come back to-morrow."

She started for the door. Going down in the elevator she counted her change. Fifteen cents! She felt her heart in her throat. The poor kid, Goldie. She needed help, and needed it right away. Sylvia felt that her shoulders were strong. In the pocket of her coat she touched the bundle of money. It was still there, all right.

But before going out onto the street, she paused a moment. She was not of a religious temperament, yet she felt that she needed Divine help.

She closed her eyes.

"Oh, You," she prayed, "whatever You are, whoever You are, for God's sake help me! Help all of us. Me, Goldie, the kid who stole the money. And do it darn quick. Amen!"

She felt relieved. Holding the money tightly in her pocket, she started out.

J. L. Clarkson was not in a particularly happy frame of mind. He scowled across the top of his huge mahogany desk at young Blaine, who stood before him nervously twisting on one foot and then the other.

Clarkson affected a brusque manner. He had found that he had to in order to be impressive. Otherwise people would walk over him. For in the bottom of his heart he knew himself to be lenient, kind, soft-hearted.

"Carelessness doesn't excuse anybody, Mr. Blaine," he said.

"I know. But you have the policeman's word for it that I was kidnaped. They hustled me into a taxi, before I knew what was happening. And then when they found out I didn't have them——"

The officer who had come with young Blaine spoke up:

"It was there I came in, sir. We've got them in jail now."

"But that doesn't take away the offense from Blaine. You deliberately handed that money to a woman?"

"Yes, sir. When I was dodging these fellows."

"She suggested it?"

"Yes, sir."

"H-m. I wager she was in on it. Describe her."

"Rather large. Not bad looking. Believe she had on a fur coat, and a hat with an orange plume. She told me she was an actress."

Clarkson called his secretary.

"Send in word to watch out for a woman of that description. Have her arrested, if she is found." Then he looked at Blaine. "You went back there?"

"Yes, sir. But she had gone."

"Well, Blaine, I'll give you until to-morrow noon to find her or bring that money back to me. Keep him with you, officer."

He turned to his desk. The inter-

view was ended as far as he was concerned. The telephone buzzed.

"What? A Miss La Reine wants to talk to me? Who is she? Never heard of her. Don't bother me with telephone calls. Tell her I'm out to lunch."

Blaine made his way to the door.

"Well," he said. "I guess it's jail for me."

Meanwhile Sylvia, having failed again in reaching Clarkson over the telephone, counted her change. Ten cents left!

"Well," she thought, "here's for a subway ride, and me with enough money in my pocket to buy a red limousine with yellow wheels. I don't know, though, think I'd make it a purple car. It would set off my fur coat better. But how I hate to ride in subways!"

She found her way to Clarkson's office, after inquiring of every other man she passed. The marble halls, the uniforms of the doormen and the elevator boys rather impressed her. The building was much more handsome than any theatrical office she had ever been in.

In the waiting room was an office boy. Sylvia hated the whole lot of them, but she smiled as she said:

"I suppose you are the office boy? Can I see Mr. Clarkson?"

"Got an appointment?"

"No, and I suppose he don't see nobody save on appointments, and has fifty people a day after him, and I'll have to talk to his secretary's secretary. But I won't see nobody but Mr. Clarkson himself. Where is he?"

"Out to lunch!"

"My Gawd! Still out. And here it is almost four o'clock. And he's still eating. And I thought these millionaires were always dying of dyspepsia. Well, go send in word that I'm here. I don't believe you."

"Card?"

"No! I don't trust my card with my name and address and telephone number on it with nobody any more."

I ain't lived and suffered for nothing. I'm Sylvia La Reine."

"I'll speak to his secretary."

"Don't trouble yourself. I don't want nothing to do with secretaries. I want to see Mr. Clarkson. Here, take this nickel. Tell him I want to see him about a matter that concerns a lot of money. And hustle along."

The boy vanished with Sylvia's last cent. In a moment a young man came out. His face was serious.

"Mr. Clarkson does not see people," he said.

"He'll see me!"

The secretary's eyebrows raised.

"What is it about?"

"I'll tell no one but him. I've got to see him. I've got something that belongs to him. It'll take only a minute out of his life, but it has taken all day for me, and twenty cents. Is that his private office?"

"Yes."

Sylvia started forward. The secretary tried to stop her, but he might as well have tried to stop a steam engine with a bean blower. Sylvia firmly, but decidedly, pushed him to one side. Into the office she swept. It was just as she had pictured it. She hadn't been to the movies for nothing. Massive furniture, but not much of it. Big windows, and real paintings on the wall. Seated at a desk was a gray-haired man. He turned quickly and frowned as Sylvia came in.

The secretary was behind her.

"A thousand pardons, Mr. Clarkson," he began. "She forced her way in."

"You bet I did. You're darn hard to see. I thought you was out to lunch. Gee, this is unconventional. Now ain't it? But then wait until I explain. You know I ain't ever talked to a millionaire before. Seen lots of their pictures in the newspapers, though. But right close up, I mean. I had a mash note from one, once. But I told him where to get off at."

"The woman's insane," said Clarkson. He pressed a button. An attendant appeared at the door. Clarkson made a gesture toward Sylvia. The man stepped forward.

"Well," said Sylvia, unaware of the fact that she was on the point of being removed by force, "did you lose one hundred thousand dollars?"

"What?"

"Well, all I've got to say is: here it is."

She reached in her pocket. But the secretary was too quick for her.

"A bomb!" he cried, seizing her arm. "Help me!"

"My Gawd!" said Sylvia, struggling in the grip of the attendant and the secretary. "What do you think I am? Let go my arm!"

She managed to shake off the man, and, reaching into her pocket, drew forth the package. She tossed it on the table.

"It ain't no bomb. It's the money you lost. Let go of me. And they say there ain't such a thing as melodrama! Open it."

The attendant quickly broke the strings. The money fell to the floor!

"What did I tell you?" said Sylvia. "Now I guess you'll believe me! I suppose I'd better explain!"

And to the amazed Clarkson, and the silly looking secretary, she told her story.

"Well," said Clarkson. "What do you think of this?"

"All I've got to say is that you ought to be thankful I'm an honest woman. Gee, an hour ago I had hold of one hundred thousand dollars, and now I'm busted. And, oh, how grand I did feel with that money in my pocket!"

Clarkson looked at her in amazement.

"This is hard to believe," he said. "Well, all I can do is to thank you."

"You bet your life you can do a lot more." Sylvia took a step toward him.

She had heard of the stinginess of millionaires. And to find one, after what she had gone through, was too much.

"Listen," she said, "I oughtn't to expect a reward for this. It's all my fault from the start. But I'm broke. And I've spent an entire day bringing back your stolen money."

An explanation was given her concerning Blaine.

"Then it wasn't stolen, and it was only me that was so good-hearted. If I was a woman who fainted, I'd pass out. Well, I ain't got no more to say. I can't even explain. But that's me. Always doing something for somebody, and getting stung. The kid didn't steal this money, and if he loses his job, I won't have no more faith in human nature."

Clarkson laughed.

"Sit down," he said. "I'd like to talk with you. I'd like to hear your story."

"What? Well, say, have you had lunch yet? Then come and buy me something to eat. I haven't had anything since breakfast!"

Late that afternoon a limousine drew up before Goldie's rooming house. Sylvia alighted. Followed by the chauffeur, his arms full of bundles, she climbed the three flights of stairs.

"Goldie," she said, as she knocked on the door. "For Gawd's sake, let me in. I've got a surprise for you."

Goldie fell back in amazement as Sylvia swept into the room.

"Now don't ask no questions till I've showed you what I've brought you. The sixteenth always was my lucky day. The kid gets his job back. I've got money to last me the rest of the week. Just give me time, and I'll explain. And say, dearie, millionaires are just as human as you and me. Tell the truth, that's my motto. Tell the truth always. See what it's brought me."



MR. STEIN: Mr. Webster, excuse me. Is this the old "Hamlet," or have you maybe made it into a musical show?

New York Stage Successes

"Rollo's Wild Oat"

A COMEDY

By Clare Kummer

BUSINESS never appealed to Rollo Webster. He had, instead, a keen feeling for the theater. This was unfortunate, because his rich grandfather, old Horatio Webster, the air-brake king, was most particularly opposed to the stage. When, however, Rollo succeeded in wheedling from the old man a sum of money with which to start in business for himself, he took

Hewston, the family butler, with him and set up a little studio on Central Park, West.

Rollo then yields to the temptation of an artistic ambition that is not unusual in the category of mortal experience. This ambition is to begin his career as an actor by appearing in the leading rôle of "Hamlet," he himself being now able to pay for the produc-

These Extracts from the Play Published by Courtesy of Clare Kummer.



ACTRESS AND AUTHOR.

Clare Kummer, who has written numerous successful comedies before "Rollo's Wild Oat," and her charming daughter Marjorie, who has made her stage début as *Lydia*, Rollo's young sister.

tion. As he tells his delighted young sister, Lydia, this is to be his one "wild oat." But Lydia warns him that grandfather would be apoplectic with rage if he knew that the "business" Rollo wanted to engage in was "Hamlet!"

Rollo, however, sends for Mr. Stein, a second-rate theatrical producer, to whom he unfolds his plan to produce a play.

STEIN: Well, Mr. Webster, the first thing I will say is—I've been in this business for twenty years, and I confess I don't know anything about it.

ROLLO: I see. Well, do you think that is a good thing?

STEIN: Well, it is a fact. What I mean to say is: if I knew what would be a *successful* play, I'd never put on anything else. But I don't know. Nobody does. It's the public. You can't count on it. Give 'em something good, and they'll go to see something bad. Give 'em something bad, and they don't like that either.

ROLLO: I see. Well, of course, there's no trouble about my play. It's a good play and the critics will all like it.

STEIN: That's what they all think, Mr. Webster. No one ever wrote a bad play that knew it.

ROLLO: Well, I didn't write this play, and when I say it's good I mean it's a play the critics will respect. They may not like my acting, but they can't find fault with the play—at least they never have.

STEIN: Oh, it has been played before! What is the name of it, Mr. Webster?

ROLLO: "Hamlet."

STEIN: "Hamlet!"

ROLLO: Yes. It may have been unfavorably spoken of at the time it was written, but not of late.

STEIN (*with melancholy conviction*): You're making a mistake, Mr. Webster. If you've money to use in the show business, take it from me, let "Hamlet" alone!

ROLLO (*earnestly*): No, Mr. Stein, I can't let *Hamlet* alone, because he won't let me alone.

STEIN: I'm sorry I asked Goldie to meet me here.

ROLLO: Who is Goldie?

STEIN: She's a little girl who has got a lot of talent, Mr. Webster. Dances, and might make a hit in a girl show, you know. (*Reminiscently*) A very pretty girl!

ROLLO: Oh! Well, I'd like to see her. I've a lot of new ideas about producing the play; it's just possible I might use her.

STEIN (*hopefully*): It ain't possible there's a "Hamlet" slipped by me, Mr. Webster? You're speaking of the old piece, ain't you, that's got "To be, or not to be" in it?

ROLLO: Yes. "To be, or not to be—whether 'tis nobler—"

STEIN (*shaking his head sadly*): I'm a man that don't like to see any one throw their money away. Money is hard to get.

ROLLO: I have leased the Oddity Theater.

STEIN: You have! What *are* these new ideas you've got about producing, Mr. Webster?

ROLLO: Well, extreme simplicity, in the first place. I would use the same set for every scene, just throwing on different lights to give an effect of ghastliness, beauty, morning, or evening, as the case may be. The text, the costumes, the lights, tell the story. Then I'd like to see steps leading down into the audience; and if at any time during the play some gifted auditor was moved to join in the performance, I'd like to allow it. I don't want to be separated from my audience.

STEIN: It's a good thing to be separated from them, Mr. Webster. It ain't the gifted ones usually that want to join in. I'm afraid those steps would lead to a general rough-house, especially with "Hamlet." Any more ideas?

ROLLO: Yes. With my modern methods—perfect naturalness and simplicity. I would like to combine the old school in the other actors, exemplifying the fact that *Hamlet* was a modern spirit surrounded by old forms, old customs and traditions. All but *Ophelia*. I would have her just such a one as myself. Modern, you know. Simple and natural. (*Miss MacDuff is announced*)

Rollo is immediately captivated by the extremely pretty, remarkably modest—almost timid—Goldie MacDuff. She is plainly dressed in a dark suit, and has about her an air of arch wistfulness.

STEIN: I guess I got you here on a false alarm, Goldie. Mr. Webster is going to play Shakespeare.

GOLDIE (*in dismay*): Shakespeare? Oh!

ROLLO: Does that mean horror, or admiration, or what?

GOLDIE (*simply*): Why, it doesn't mean anything—only that lets me out.

STEIN: If you'd have come into my office yesterday, I could have put you into a nice little revue—the "Midnight Riot"—a supper show, good money.

GOLDIE: You know I can't do those things.

ROLLO (*interested*): Why?

GOLDIE (*embarrassed*): It sounds so silly—but I get sleepy about twelve o'clock. I'm used to going to bed early.

STEIN: Ain't that ridiculous? And she's just made for it!

ROLLO: I was just thinking—in the play I'm going to do there is a very sweet, simple young girl, unhappy, you know—the way they usually are. I know that you can do it. You shall play *Ophelia*!

GOLDIE: Oh, but that would be dreadful! Why, I couldn't any more play *Ophelia*! It's a great part, and some one great should play it.

ROLLO: *Ophelia* wasn't a great tragedienne, forty-five years old. She was just a simple little girl like you; she fell in love with me. That's all you've got to do. I mean—you can play *Ophelia* because you're pretty and young and you've got blond hair. Is it long?

GOLDIE (*rising*): Oh, no, I couldn't, Mr. Webster—Yes, it is long.

ROLLO (*turning to Stein*): Well, Mr. Stein, Miss MacDuff is just what I want.

STEIN: What!

ROLLO: For *Ophelia*. Now, about the rest of the cast, if you want to go on with it—

STEIN: Well, I'm getting quite interested in your project, Mr. Webster.

ROLLO: Good! Then why not go ahead

until something stops us? I don't care who you engage for the rest of the cast as long as they're regular Shakespearean actors, but they must have had experience.

STEIN: Well, if Shakespearean actors don't have experiences, I don't know who does.

ROLLO: Suppose you bring an assortment around here to-morrow night. It might be better for me to look at them before you engage them.

Arrangements completed, Mr. Stein and Miss MacDuff depart. Rollo is exuberant over his meeting with the charming Goldie, and is singing at the

piano when the bell rings. Hewston opens the door.

GOLDIE (*entering, much agitated*): Oh, Mr. Webster, do please forgive me for coming back!

ROLLO (*enthusiastically*): Forgive you? Why, I'm perfectly delighted to see you! I've missed you terribly.

GOLDIE (*embarrassed*): It's very hard for me to tell you why I came back, Mr. Webster.

ROLLO: Then why do it? Suppose we say you came back because I was wishing you would—and wishing hard that I had asked for your telephone number. You have one, haven't you?

GOLDIE (*simply*): No, Mr. Webster. The man in the drug store gives me messages if they are important.

ROLLO: Does he decide whether they're important or not?

GOLDIE: Yes. (*Beseechingly*) But don't let's speak of such things at a time like this, Mr. Webster.

ROLLO: A time like this? Is this some sort of a time?

GOLDIE: Oh, indeed—indeed, it is!

ROLLO: Good heavens! Then we'd better fortify ourselves for it. (*Ringing*) Hewston, some tea.

GOLDIE: Oh, I had to come to tell you—to beg you—Oh, please, Mr. Webster, don't go on with it! (*Tragically*) He's going to do it—he said so, on the way down in the elevator.

ROLLO: But I'm glad he is. I expected him to.

GOLDIE: But you don't know him as I do. It isn't because he thinks it will be *good*. It is just—just to get your money. He thinks if it does succeed, it will be because it is so bad.

ROLLO: Never mind what he thinks. I wouldn't even accuse him of such a thing.

GOLDIE: But do you



Rollo's Aunt Lane protests at his undertaking the rôle of *Hamlet*.

realize what he is? He is not a good manager at all, Mr. Webster.

ROLLO (*a m-i-ably*): Of course not. No good manager would have anything to do with me.

GOLDIE: And I am nothing at all, Mr. Webster. I don't suppose there is a worse actress in the world. I'm terribly afraid, in the first place; my mouth dries up and I want to run right off the stage. (*HEWSTON serves tea.*)

ROLLO (*calmly*): Will you have lemon or cream? Cream, I think, is better for you; it's more soothing.

GOLDIE: I do wish you would save yourself from us, Mr. Webster, before it's too late.

ROLLO (*handing her a copy of "Hamlet"*): I'm going to lend this to you, so you can read over the part of Ophelia.

GOLDIE: Please don't!

ROLLO: You won't be afraid when you see how much Ophelia is like you. She's afraid and everything.

GOLDIE: I know

—I know what you mean. Don't make me, please! I know the part perfectly well.

ROLLO (*surprised*): You know it?

GOLDIE: Oh, yes! My grandmother made me learn all those parts—*Juliet* and *Desdemona* and *Rosalind* and *Ophelia*—



LYDIA (*to the attractive young Thespian who plays Laertes*): You've been so kind to me, Mr. Lucas, helping me about my part, and everything. But I don't think I'll ever be really great. Do you?

ROLLO: She did? What a wonderful grandmother!

GOLDIE: Yes, she was wonderful, Mr. Webster. Perhaps you've heard of her. They called her "the beautiful Mary Mowe." She was a great actress. But I'm simply



LYDIA: But where were you, Rollo? ROLLO: I've been out looking at the moon. Just across the street, in a doorway I found over there.

awful on the stage. I'm not so bad off—you see I'm not. (*Taking the teacup*) I can lift up a cup and everything—but on the stage, my hands take the strangest shapes; my feet don't look the same. Don't let me do it!

ROLLO (*greatly interested*): My dear child, I don't care what you may or may not have been. You will find that playing *Ophelia* with me is quite different from anything you have ever imagined. You're not drinking your tea. Isn't it right?

GOLDIE (*sadly*): Oh, yes, it's delicious. Well, that's all, Mr. Webster. I can't do any more than warn you. (*Rising*) I must go.

ROLLO (*hopefully*): Let me get a cab and take you home

GOLDIE: No—no, thank you. I live 'way downtown.

ROLLO: I was going 'way downtown, anyway.

GOLDIE: Oh, not as far as I go, I'm sure.

ROLLO: What street is it?

GOLDIE: Eighth Street.

ROLLO (*promptly*): I was, though. I was going to Seventh Street. I was really going. I can prove it. Look, here's my hat and stick! Please!

GOLDIE: No, Mr. Webster, I can't believe that you were going down to Seventh Street.

ROLLO: Well, could you believe I was going down to Forty-second Street and Broadway?

GOLDIE: Yes.

ROLLO: Then we'll go there.

GOLDIE (*reassured*): And I can take the subway.

ROLLO: Yes; won't that be jolly? I'll dash down to the street and get a cab. I'll be right back for you.

But unfortunately, during Rollo's absence his sister Lydia, waiting in the next room to see him, takes it into her

head to sing a little song. The conservative, overcautious Goldie, hearing a woman's voice, suspects the worst! Hewston comes in for the tea things.

HEWSTON (*hesitantly*): If you'll excuse my saying so, miss, I heard you mention your grandmother, "the beautiful Mary Mowle."

GOLDIE: Yes?

HEWSTON: What would you say, miss, if I was to tell you that my father acted with her?

GOLDIE: Your father! What was his name?

HEWSTON: Eustace Hewston, miss.

GOLDIE: Why, he was almost as great as grandma!

HEWSTON: Yes, miss. That was him. And I was raised to follow in his footsteps. But what was the use? There was no call for acting in London. Only in the provinces. That was the only place they would stand for Shakespeare.

GOLDIE: Are you sorry, Hewston? I

mean, would you have been happier, do you think, acting Shakespeare?

HEWSTON: Who can say, miss? I would like to have played *Hamlet* just once. But I might not have been any happier if I had. There's a great many, miss, that wishes to play that part. I sometimes think Shakespeare has a great deal to answer for in the general discontent among the laboring classes.

ROLLO (*reentering joyfully*): All ready! I've got a beautiful cab all lined with royal purple. On to Forty-second Street!

GOLDIE (*firmly*): Mr. Webster, I've changed my mind.

ROLLO: Really? On to Eighth Street?

GOLDIE: No. I don't want you to go with me at all.

ROLLO (*puzzled and disappointed*): How can you have taken such a dislike to me just since I've been downstairs?

GOLDIE: I haven't taken a dislike to you, but I want to go by myself.

ROLLO (*hurt*): Oh, very well, then. Will you at least ride in my cab?



Mrs. PARK-GALES (*the QUEEN in ROLLO's production*): This is a very beautiful wig that I wore for years, as *Ophelia*. I have offered it to Miss MacDuff, but she has refused it. None too generously, either.

GOLDIE (*hesitating*): I'd rather not.

ROLLO (*sadly*): I suppose I'll never see you again.

GOLDIE: Oh, yes, to-morrow night—if you really want me for the part.

ROLLO (*relieved*): Oh, can I really have you—if I want you?

GOLDIE: Oh, yes. I couldn't afford to refuse a part. (*Appealingly*) But I think it's better to be quite independent—I mean about going home and things like that. Don't you?

ROLLO (*earnestly*): I think it's awful—but you won't always feel the way you do. I'm sure you won't.

The door finally closed upon Goldie, Rollo turns to see Lydia tiptoeing in. It is perfectly evident that she has been eavesdropping, for she is all a-quiver with curiosity.

ROLLO: What are you doing here? Sneak!

LYDIA: I'm not! I'm just a loving, anxious sister.

ROLLO: That's the same thing! You've been there all the time? Spying on me!

LYDIA: I wouldn't have done it, Rollo, but my life is so uninteresting. And I had no idea that any one was coming but Mr. Stein, when I started sneaking.

ROLLO: Neither had I.

LYDIA: I know it, Rollo. And then she came—your wild oat!

ROLLO (*indignantly*): What do you mean—my wild oat? There's nothing wild-oatlike about her. She wouldn't even let me take her to the subway in a cab.

LYDIA (*with romantic fervor*): She was right, Rollo. Actresses have to be awfully careful of their reputations. Oh, Rollo! If I could only be like her!

ROLLO (*condescendingly*): Don't be foolish.

LYDIA: But why is it foolish? Oh, Rollo! Won't you please let me be in it? Oh, please, Rollo! I'll do anything for you if you will.

ROLLO: My poor child, have a cookie; your mind seems to be quite unhinged.

LYDIA: I don't want it. Rollo, why can't I? I must have some talent. I'm your sister.

ROLLO: What do you think nature has fitted you for—in the tragedy of "Hamlet?"

LYDIA: I don't know. I'd be willing to be anything—just to have some fun like the rest of you.

ROLLO: Fun! You don't suppose we're doing it for fun?

LYDIA: Well, what are you doing it for? No one wants you to do it.

ROLLO: I'm doing it because it's been my lifelong ambition.

LYDIA: Isn't there just some little part I could play?

ROLLO (*decisively*): No. There aren't any little parts.

LYDIA: I know there are; there always are. People just come on and then you never see them again. I'd be willing to be one of those. Rollo, I'm your only little sister. Suppose anything should happen to me; then you'd be sorry.

ROLLO: Yes, I would. And I can at least see that this doesn't happen to you!

LYDIA (*her manner changing*): I can't promise that I won't tell grandfather the whole thing then. If it's so debasing, I don't think you ought to do it.

ROLLO: If you tell grandfather before the opening performance, I shall never speak of you as being my sister again.

LYDIA: That won't matter. Every one knows I am.

ROLLO (*weakening*): There's only one part you could possibly play, and certainly you would not want to do that.

LYDIA (*eagerly*): I'd love to! Who is it?

ROLLO (*with sarcasm*): It's a part that requires wearing tights. You wouldn't mind that, I suppose?

LYDIA: No, Rollo—not in Shakespeare. Oh, my dear, darling brother! (*Embracing him*) What is my name in the play?

ROLLO: Your name is *Prologue*, and all you have to say is, "For us and for our tragedy, here stooping to your clemency, we beg your hearing patiently."

LYDIA: Oh, Rollo, you have made me so happy!

ROLLO: Well, it was quite unintentional, Lyd, believe me!

In the days that follow, rehearsals proceed rapidly, more to the satisfaction of Rollo than to the odd assortment of Shakespearean actors provided by Mr. Stein. The irrepressible Lydia has the time of her life indulging in a flirtation with the fascinating young actor who plays *Laertes*, while Rollo pursues his ardent courtship of the modest and lovely Miss MacDuff. Goldie's reluctance to attempt *Ophelia* continues, but so also do Rollo's insistence and encouragement.

The opening night at last arrives, and *Hamlet's* first scene is in progress. Behind the scenes, Goldie, in a fever of dread, awaits her cue, when a message



MR. STEIN: Sure, I got a heart—but you got to control your heart, Goldie, in this business.

comes for Rollo. "Come at once if you ever wish to see your grandfather alive," it says. Goldie, who is sure that Rollo's grandfather means more to him than *Hamlet*, rushes onto the stage.

ROLLO (*dramatically swinging into his speech to the Queen Mother*): 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother—

GOLDIE (*breaking in, excitedly*): Oh, stop! Wait! It's—it's your grandfather!

ROLLO (*horified but endeavoring to save the situation*): How now, Ophelia? What dost thou here?

GOLDIE: Oh, you will forgive me when you know about it! You must come with me at once.

ROLLO (*severely*): Begone, girl! Art mad before thy time?

GOLDIE: No, no! Oh, please! You must believe me. Your grandfather has sent for you—

ROLLO (*angrily*): Get thee to a nunnery, and quickly, too!

GOLDIE: Surely he's more important than all this—

ROLLO (*still dramatically*): A grandfather is important—even necessary—but there is a time and place for everything.

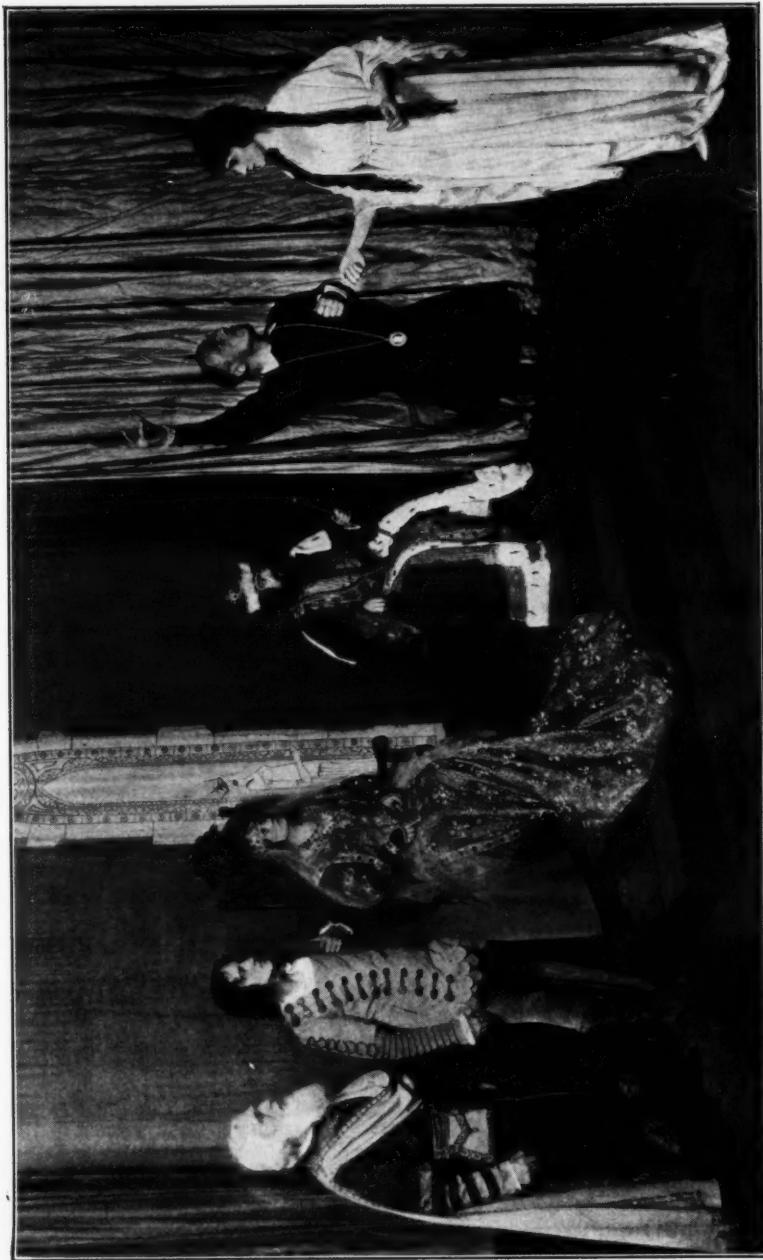
GOLDIE: But he's ill—very ill! No one else would tell you.

ROLLO: Is this true? Think well before you speak, for if I leave this scene, my future hopes are quite, quite—blasted.

GOLDIE: Yes, oh, yes—it's true!

ROLLO (*dropping his rôle and speaking in a matter-of-fact voice*): Then that's the end of it as far as I'm concerned. (*Walks off the stage*.)

Without stopping to remove his *Hamlet's* costume, Rollo rushes to the bedside of his dying grandfather. But he finds the hot-tempered old man sitting up in the living room, denouncing the conspiracy which has kept Rollo's secret from him.



In the midst of *Hamlet's* speech to the *Queen Mother*, Rollo is interrupted by Goldie with news of his grandfather's illness. "What dost thou here, Ophelia?" Rollo improvises hastily.



ROLLO: Grandfather, not a word to Miss MacDuff that will hurt her feelings, or I will leave this house forever.

HORATIO (angrily): You've kept it all from me, that's what you've done! I have to hear the news from a common servant. "Are you pleased that Mr. Rollo's playing in a theater this evening?" That's the question that's put to me just after my dinner. Pleased! Am I pleased!

ROLLO (not yet grasping the situation and turning to his AUNT LANE): You should have let me know before. You must have realized it long before you sent for me.

AUNT LANE (completely mystified): Rollo, what in the world do you mean?

HORATIO (hastily): I kept it from them, Rollo. I kept it from every one but you. I—I suffered in silence.

AUNT LANE: Kept it from every one? Suffered in silence!

ROLLO: Oh, to think that perhaps you're not dying, grandfather! Oh, the relief!

AUNT LANE: Dying? Why, your grandfather has no more idea of dying than I have!

ROLLO: Lane, I wish you'd go. How do you know what ideas I may have?

AUNT LANE (reproachfully): Horatio!

ROLLO: Don't speak to him like that.

AUNT LANE (beginning to suspect): Is it possible, Horatio, that you sent for this poor child out of spite?

ROLLO (defiantly): No, it is not, Lane. You know nothing of my condition.

AUNT LANE: I know that no one could eat such a dinner as you did and be ill.

ROLLO (surprised): You—you really ate your dinner, grandfather?

HORATIO: Hardly a mouthful, Rollo. Your Aunt Lane sat behind the centerpiece, the large fernery. She couldn't possibly have seen what I ate.

ROLLO (*quiet, but suspicious*): And the doctor? Why isn't the doctor here?

AUNT LANE: We haven't had the doctor, Rollo.

ROLLO (*rising*): I begin to see it all.

AUNT LANE (*sympathetically*): Rollo, my poor child, come into the library and have a little glass of port and a biscuit before you talk to your grandfather.

ROLLO: Oh! You talk to me of port and biscuit! Do you realize what I've done? I've left my play—my theater full of people—my manager—my actors—left them all with no excuse for it in the world that I can ever offer—and myself, most of all, I've left myself there in the theater.

HORATIO: Well spoken, my boy, but that will do.

AUNT LANE: My poor child! But remember, Rollo, that nothing is as dreadful or as important as it seems. (*Exits*.)

HORATIO: The first sensible thing I ever heard your aunt say. (*Observing Rollo's costume for the first time*) Rollo! What are you doing in those clothes?

ROLLO (*with dignity*): These are my working clothes, grandfather.

HORATIO: What! You are wearing the costume of *Hamlet*—the great Dane of Elsinore! My God!

ROLLO: Don't disturb yourself about it, sir. It's past, and it won't occur again.

HORATIO: I should have known—yes, I should have suspected. *Hamlet*!

ROLLO (*deeply distressed*): Grandfather, did you—did you send that message—just to get me here?

HORATIO: Of course not, my boy. I sent it because I knew it would kill me if you went on with all that foolishness. If I had known you were playing *Hamlet*, I promise you, on my word of honor, I would be stone dead as I sit here.

ROLLO (*still and tense*): No one would tell me. They thought the play was more important—all but the girl who was going to play *Ophelia*; she ran out on the stage. I was just beginning my long speech—

HORATIO (*with satisfaction*): Stopped you in the beginning, did she?

ROLLO: I never knew how much I cared for you, grandfather. I left the scene and all the people as if they hadn't been there, but now—I believe you have ruined my life.

HORATIO: No, my dear boy, I have not. You must take my word for it.

ROLLO: My career as an actor is over. I

may be wrong about it—but I believe it is over. (*BELLA, the maid, enters*.)

BELLA: The young lady wants to know if she's to wait, or go home with the cabman.

HORATIO: What young lady?

ROLLO: Miss MacDuff, grandfather—the girl who played *Ophelia*. We ran out of the theater together just as we were. I don't know whether she followed me or I dragged her after me.

HORATIO (*to BELLA*): Tell her to come in here. I wish to see her.

ROLLO: No, grandfather. She will understand you not seeing her.

HORATIO: But I wish to see her.

BELLA: The cabman says it's thirty-five dollars, and he wants to know if he's to wait.

HORATIO: Wait? I should say so! Wait forever!

ROLLO: He drove all the way from the city, grandfather. When I told him it was a matter of life and death, he said it would be thirty-five dollars.

HORATIO: You told him? A nice way to make a bargain! It's a wonder he hadn't said a hundred and thirty-five!

ROLLO: That's what I thought. Come in, Goldie. (*GOLDIE hesitates in the doorway*.)

HORATIO (*looking at her keenly*): So—it's *Ophelia*. Rollo, leave me alone with her.

ROLLO: No, grandfather, I prefer to stay. I won't listen to what you say, but I prefer to remain.

HORATIO: What? You go and pay the cabman. Have you any money on you?

ROLLO: No, sir.

HORATIO: Get it from your Aunt Lane in the library. Tell her to take it out of the housekeeping money.

ROLLO: Grandfather, not a word to Miss MacDuff that will hurt her feelings, or I will leave this house forever.

HORATIO: Leave this room now—that's all I ask of you. I have met this sort of lady before. I know how to treat 'em.

ROLLO: Your actresses were not like Goldie, sir. (*Exits*.)

HORATIO (*to GOLDIE*): Come here. (*GOLDIE goes slowly to him*.) Sit down. (*Sternly*) Are you going to marry my grandson?

GOLDIE (*hastily*): Oh, no, no, Mr. Webster! I have no idea of such a thing.

HORATIO (*severely*): Oh! And are you in the habit of running about the country at night, in the costume of *Ophelia*, with young men you don't intend to marry?

GOLDIE: No, really. I never did such a thing before. But it was so terrible to be left in the theater, and we were so worried about you—and the idea of playing *Ophelia* all by myself was so dreadful—

HORATIO: Why? You've played it before, haven't you?

GOLDIE: No, Mr. Webster, never.

HORATIO: Oh! What have you played?

GOLDIE (*hesitating*): Why, nothing very much, Mr. Webster. I've been mostly—in musical shows.

HORATIO: Oh, you sing.

GOLDIE: No, I don't.

HORATIO (*studying her intently*): Don't you have to sing to be in musical shows?

GOLDIE: No.

You—you don't.

HORATIO: Oh! Well, what are the qualifications necessary?

GOLDIE (*embarrassed*): Why, different things, Mr. Webster.

HORATIO: What in your case?

GOLDIE: Why, I think it was my ankles—mostly.

HORATIO: Oh! And your qualifications for playing *Ophelia* were the same, I suppose?

GOLDIE: Yes, Mr. Webster—I mean I hadn't any. I was the one all along to—to beg your grandson not to play *Hamlet*. Not to be an actor at all; to—to take an interest in air brakes.

HORATIO: Air brakes? What do you know about air brakes?

GOLDIE: Nothing—nothing at all—except that they need to be improved.

HORATIO: Who says they do?

GOLDIE: He told me.

HORATIO: Rollo? (GOLDIE

nods.) Well, he'll be a great help to the business. So he told you that. (*Eying her suspiciously*) And a great many other things, I suppose.

GOLDIE: What do you mean, Mr. Webster?

HORATIO: Well, enough to make you think he was a pretty desirable young man. Come now, didn't he? He told you that he had a large country place.

GOLDIE: Yes, Mr. Webster. He told me



HORATIO: And are you in the habit of running about the country at night, dressed like *Ophelia*?

about this place and the lovely garden—and
—you—

HORATIO: I see. And you thought it would be very easy to annex this young gentleman and his possessions?

GOLDFIE: No, Mr. Webster, I didn't. (*Rising with dignity, but almost in tears*) What I thought doesn't matter, Mr. Webster. And what you think of me doesn't matter, for I shall not see either of you after to-night.

HORATIO (*pleased*): There, that's right. I like to see you show some spirit. Now sit right down by me again and tell me—

GOLDFIE: No, I must go, Mr. Webster. But before I go I want to tell you that Rollo hasn't the slightest idea of—of what we've been talking about. Of—of me. While he may like me, I'm sure there are others that he likes as well—or better.

HORATIO: What do you mean by that? Actresses?

GOLDFIE: I really couldn't tell you—I don't mean anything.

HORATIO: Then I'll have that young rascal in here and make him tell me. Ring that bell.

GOLDFIE: No, Mr. Webster. You must promise me first that you won't say one word of what we have been talking about. In the first place it will make Rollo very angry.

HORATIO: Dear, dear, how terrifying! Certainly I'll promise. Just let me get after him! Just about the air brakes, my dear, that's all. (*GOLDFIE rings the bell and goes out quickly*.) Don't go any farther than the library!

Rollo enters, much depressed, to meet a fresh attack from his irascible grandfather.

HORATIO: So, in addition to everything else, you've been making a damned ass of yourself over women!

ROLLO: No, sir.

HORATIO (*drawing Rollo to him with rough tenderness*): Don't you know that you're all I care about in the world? Why do you want to disgrace me—raising Cain all over New York City?

ROLLO (*moodily*): I'll give it all up. I'll admit that I'm an utter failure—and—I'll go into the business of selling air brakes at once.

HORATIO: Do you suppose I want an utter failure selling air brakes? I wouldn't have you in my business.

ROLLO (*without spirit*): Perhaps some one will have me, somewhere.

HORATIO: You're very young, Rollo, but I wouldn't mind your marrying, if you would marry some one I wouldn't object to.



HORATIO (*sarcastically*): Is the entire company here, Rollo? Because, if so, you can go on with the play, I should think.



Lydia gives her grandfather's hot toddy to Mr. Lucas.

ROLLO: Thank you, grandfather, but I'd mind marrying any one you wouldn't object to, I'm sure.

HORATIO: No, my boy. Now tell me: is there any one—have you any one in mind?

ROLLO: No, sir.

HORATIO: Come, come, my boy, don't say that. I know there is some one.

ROLLO: If you mean Goldie, she won't have me. I just asked her in the hall.

HORATIO: What the devil did you do that for?

ROLLO: I saw you had been making her cry. Besides, I felt like it.

HORATIO: That little chorus girl—you asked her to—to marry you?

ROLLO: She's a wonderful girl, grandfather. Her grandmother was the greatest actress in England.

HORATIO: I don't believe it. What was her name?

ROLLO: Her name was Mary Mowe.

HORATIO: What? What's that you say? Mary Mowe! Rollo, I—I—of all the—

ROLLO: Stop, grandfather. You shall not say one word against her!

Strangely enough, it was "the beautiful Mary Mowe" who was the sweet-

heart of Horatio's youth, and he begins to see Goldie in quite another light.

ROLLO: You don't mean that your actress was my Goldie's grandmother?

HORATIO: No! Your Goldie's grandmother was my actress. That is, she would have been, but she didn't want to leave the stage for anybody. I was broken-hearted and I came back to America and married your grandmother. Then Mary relented—said she had changed her mind—wrote me letters, such beautiful letters! But grandma was firm. I never saw her again.

The following morning Horatio summons Goldie. He wishes to question her about her grandmother.

HORATIO (*almost timidly*): Did she—er—did she ever—mention my name?

GOLDIE: Well, you see I was so young when I left England, but I'm sure she did—to my mother, anyway. Did you know grandmother when she was playing?

HORATIO: Yes, that was when I knew her. "The beautiful Mary Mowe!" You have a trace of her—but not much, my dear. Not much.

GOLDIE: Oh, no, I'm not like grandma.

HORATIO (*reminiscently*): Mary was the most exquisite Ophelia. How I wept over her mad scene!

GOLDIE: You would weep over mine, but it would be for a very different reason, Mr. Webster. I simply can't act; I don't like it, and I can't.

HORATIO (*interested*): Can't you now? What do you like to do?

GOLDIE: Oh, I don't know, really. I never had time to do anything I like. I love children and flowers and—my sweet-grass sewing basket. I love to sew—and put initials on things.

HORATIO: Oh, if she had only been more like you!

GOLDIE: Oh, dear! No one ever said that before.

HORATIO: I would have given her all the flowers and children and sewing baskets and initials in the world—but she wouldn't have them.

GOLDIE: Oh, really, Mr. Webster? Was it—that way?

HORATIO: That's the way it was, my dear. If I had waited, everything might have been different.

GOLDIE: I might have been your granddaughter, Mr. Webster—with some little changes.

HORATIO: Yes, that's true. And now history repeats itself—you refuse my grandson. He told me you did.

Meantime Rollo is having an interview with Mr. Stein, who, piloted by Hewston, has come out to the Webster place on the morning train. To Rollo's amazement, the manager is in high good humor, bringing with him the press notices of the performance from all the morning papers. Rollo writhes at the thought of reading them.

STEIN: But you don't understand, Mr. Webster. The notices are all favorable. Here is Fume—you know how irritable he is—he is crazy about us.

ROLLO: Just a moment, Mr. Stein. Did the performance go on after I left?

STEIN: Sure, we went on. (*Reads.*) "All doubts of the commercial value of Shakespeare were dispelled last night at the Oddity Theater, where 'Hamlet' was produced by the Rollster Producing Company. Mr. Rollo Webster appeared in the name part. The indisposition of the young man was noticeable from the first—"

ROLLO: Stop. Did you say was noticeable "from the first?" (*Taking paper and waving STEIN off as he reads.*) "From the first,

When the impresario announced that he had withdrawn from the cast and asked if there was a *Hamlet* in the house, the response was almost unanimous, and a favorable comment on the classical education of our English-speaking public." Why, Mr. Stein, this is pure sarcasm! You don't take this seriously—

STEIN: We are taking money at the box office seriously, Mr. Webster. You haven't come to what was the surprise of the evening.

ROLLO (*reading*): "The surprise of the evening was Mr. James Hewston, who was found to be in Mr. Webster's dressing room and perfectly conversant with the rôle. From the moment he stepped on the stage the house was in an uproar." *Hewston* played the part?

STEIN: The biggest laughing hit in the world—that's what it is! I will say you were not as funny in the part as I thought you would be. I want you to persuade Hewston to stay in the part. He isn't as pleased as I am over the way it went. You tell him that people always laugh more or less over these old shows. After all, how could any one that lived as long ago as Shakespeare know what would be funny now?

It is indeed true that the Webster's butler has made a hit in "Hamlet," but it is a hit which crushes him.

HEWSTON (*to HORATIO and ROLLO*): I am crushed, sirs. I have played the greatest part in the world—and during the soliloquy they laughed at me—they laughed!

HORATIO: Good—good—I mean horrible, horrible!

HEWSTON: The times have changed, sirs. There is no appreciation of greatness; the stage has become debased. (*To ROLLO*) I am through with it, and I do not wish to stay with any one connected in any way with the theater. (*To HORATIO*) I would like to return to service, sir.

ROLLO: Hewston, I feel I ought to thank you for what you did last night.

HEWSTON: I beg that you won't, sir. I'd rather we never mentioned the subject.

ROLLO: I feel the same way myself, Hewston. But we shouldn't. We should learn something from our experience. I am beginning to think that "Hamlet" is a thing to be played in the privacy of one's bedroom, Hewston.

HEWSTON: Perhaps you're right, sir.

Alone with Goldie at last, Rollo turns to a happier theme.

ROLLO: My grandfather was in love with

your grandmother, and he's perfectly willing for me to marry you.

GOLDIE (*pleased*): Oh, is he, Mr. Webster?

ROLLO (*with determination*): Yes. But what difference does it make? You're not willing. I asked you last night and—and you refused me. If you think I'm going to ask you this morning just because my grandfather is willing, you're mistaken.

GOLDIE: Still, I can't help being glad he wouldn't have minded.

ROLLO: Goldie, listen to me. If you expect me to go on proposing to you—the way my grandfather did to your grandmother—one hundred times that he remembers and probably more that he's forgotten—just put it out of your mind.

GOLDIE: Why, Mr. Webster!

ROLLO (*firmly*): Stop calling me that. I ask you now for the last time, making a sum total of two. This will be final, Goldie. I mean it. (*Stopping in fear*) If you like, I'll wait until you know more of what I'm going to develop into. The Websters are all precisely alike. I'll get my Uncle John Webster to come for a visit and you can look at him—that will be me at middle age, and I'll be just like grandfather when I'm seventy. That's all there is to it. Take me or leave me. I will not go on like this. (*He stops miserably*.)

GOLDIE (*gently*): Will you let me say something?

ROLLO: Yes. Please say it quickly—just in one word.

GOLDIE: Rollo, I want you to forgive me.

ROLLO (*disappointed*): Oh!

GOLDIE: I thought such dreadful things of you—because of the girl I heard singing in your apartment the first day I met you. Now I know it was your sister.

ROLLO: Lydia? She doesn't sing very well, but I'm not responsible for that.

GOLDIE: You must forgive me for what I thought. She was *there*, you see.

ROLLO (*puzzled*): So were you!

GOLDIE: I know, but she was *there* first. And I was so surprised and disappointed—because I thought you were so nice.

ROLLO: I see; you thought she was a wild oat. It doesn't matter. Don't apologize for that.

GOLDIE: Oh, Rollo! I'm so sorry about *Hamlet*.

ROLLO: Good heavens! Don't be sorry for *Hamlet*. Be sorry for me!

GOLDIE (*with sudden tears*): That's what I mean. You care more for him than you do for anybody.

ROLLO (*distressed*): I don't—I don't! Why, Goldie, I realize now that all the time I was striding around in "Hamlet," I was really only stumbling my way to you. I'll ask you to marry me again when we both feel more like it.

GOLDIE: Will you? I'd like not to be crying when I accept you.

ROLLO: Then we'll go on a long journey, far away from here. We'll borrow your sister's baby so people will think we've been married a long time, and won't annoy us. Wouldn't you like that?

GOLDIE: Yes, but— Oh, it would be even more wonderful to stay here in this house, and walk in that beautiful garden, and feel it was home!

ROLLO: Oh, well, we can do that, too. It won't take long to walk around the garden, and think about home a little. (*They start for the door*.)

GOLDIE (*almost weeping*): And, Rollo, I love your grandfather!

ROLLO: Never mind, darling. I love your grandmother! (*They go out the door into the garden*.)



The Mission of the Sunday Serge

By Helen R. Martin

Author of "Tillie, a Mennonite Maid," "Barnabetta," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

A story for wives. If you know of any better treatment for an erring husband, put it into a story and let us see it.

FEELINGS of compunction toward the neglected young wife to whom he was returning late one night in the early spring, after three hours of philandering with fluffy Flossie Flickinger, struggled in Luther Lichter's heart with a bored impatience at the prospect before him of tears, recriminations, reproaches, injured innocence calling upon Heaven to witness whether she had not always been a faithful wife to him who now didn't love her any more.

He could hear it all in advance; he had heard it all so often! Oh, so tiresomely often! Not, indeed, from Ellie, his wife, whom, until just now, at the end of the second year of their marriage, he had never given any real cause to accuse him of neglect; it had been the married experiences of his two elder brothers that had taught him how wives take these episodes. Before his own marriage he had boarded one year at Calvin's home and six months at Zwingli's; so what he didn't know about wives!

"Knowing all I knewed about the un-holy estate of matrimony, it wonders me why I ever up and put my head in the noose! Well, it only goes to show that——"

Whether it went to show what weak, unreasoning fools men were, or how overpowering the charm of women, Luther could not quite decide.

As he walked through the one long, dimly lighted street of Virginsville, past the darkened, silent homes, past his own general store and the other little stores of the village, he grinned and shrugged his shoulders at the realization that he seemed to be the only man in the place who, at this lurid hour of ten-thirty, was not in bed asleep. Was he the only husband in Virginsville who ever wandered away from the family circle? Calvin and Zwingli, he knew, had both given up trying to break the traces; the tragic lamentations of their wives had made it too uncomfortable for them. Doggedly and sullenly they had settled down to the jog trot, the deadly monotony.

"But me, I'm just a-goin' to learn Ellie that I won't leave her interfere with my goin' and comin' as I want!" he stubbornly told himself.

The spring had got into his blood and he felt an irritating restlessness under his matrimonial bondage that made him miserable. He wondered whether Flossie Flickinger chafed as much at her shackles.

Suddenly, with an unwonted flash of insight, he saw the position of Flossie's husband.

"Say! That would be a pickle—to be married to a girl that liked another one better! By Hooley!"

He wondered how that would "make a fellah feel." He knew all about the

effect of having your wife care for you too much. That was the trouble with Ellie; she was too good, too dutiful, too loving, too everything that was tame and uninteresting. Her very name, "Ellie," had come to have a sticky-sweet sound to him.

"Could you pitcher to yourself a girl named 'Ellen' bein' a flirt or sich a vamp yet? No! You could not!" he decided self-pityingly.

But just suppose Ellie was like Flossie, given to flirting, in her husband's absence, with other men? Ellie was so pretty and sweet that there would be plenty of men to "fall for her."

However, Luther only laughed in genuine amusement at the absurdity of such a supposition. Ellie's sense of duty, her candor and truthfulness, left no chance of any such exciting variation from the humdrum of their married life as Flossie might afford her man. She was, indeed, so yielding, dutiful, and loving that he was "getting fed up on it."

But naturally the fonder she was of him, the more would she use that deadly weapon of a wife, tears and grief, for holding him to her; for robbing him of his personal freedom to go and come as he pleased and no questions asked.

"She'll soon find out, though, that I ain't such a sheep like my two brothers, to leave my wife henpeck me into stayin' home everings when I don't feel for it!"

If women could only know that these weapons they used—weeping, accusations, plead-

ing for a love that had flickered out—were the surest means of cooling even the ashes of that dying love, and that what they succeeded in holding fast was only the shell with the kernel gone!

He saw, as he approached his house—a pretty, little, yellow frame cottage—



W. H. Beard
There she stood before him, embarrassed, guilty looking, blushing, in a party frock. Where on earth could she have been without him?

that it was in darkness. Then Ellie was not sitting up for him to-night. Last night, when he had returned at ten-thirty from his pleasant evening with Flossie, he had found his wife propped up in bed reading the Bible! A sentimental trick meant to convict him of sin, that he might be overcome with remorse. But its only effect had been to provoke a contemptuous and amused shrug.

He walked firmly upstairs to their bedroom, wearing the armor of a stern and forbidding frown. If he found her crying and "playing the injured-wife stunt," she would find how callous and indifferent he could be to that "rigamarole!"

He was not a little taken aback to discover their room empty, the bed untouched. He stood still in the middle of the floor and stared. This was indeed unexpected.

In moving pictures they always left a note. He examined the bureau, the pillow. Nothing. He had given her no cause to leave him! He had not been unfaithful; he had only sought a bit of amusement and diversion.

Where could she be? Ellie was much too reserved to risk a scandal by going to one of her "girl friends" for the night. And her father's home was twenty-five miles out in the country.

It was eleven o'clock when he turned out the light and got into bed, an alarming hour for any one in Virginsville to be "re-tah-ring." But he could not sleep. Curiosity, speculation, surprise, anxiety, kept him awake.

And then, on the stroke of twelve, he was startled by the sound of the cautious opening of the front door. She had come back! His wife out alone until twelve o'clock at night!

He heard her come upstairs stealthily. He lay as motionless as death as she entered the room. She did not turn on the light. She was undressing in the dark.

From his bed he could reach the electric button. Suddenly he lifted his arm and illumined the room.

There she stood before him, embarrassed, guilty looking, blushing, in a party frock, the pink frock that he disapproved of as being too low-necked. He had never seen her look prettier. Where on earth could she have been without him? Such things were not done in Virginsville. He gazed at her with disturbingly conflicting feelings of indignation, jealousy, and a new tenderness—born of his uncertainty and anxiety—for her girlish sweetness.

"Where was you?" he demanded.

"Not where you was," she smiled, the guilty look disappearing, the high color in her cheeks and the sparkle of her eyes flaunting a gayety of spirit that, under the circumstances, was nothing short of outrageous.

"Then you wasn't where you had ought to be!" he said sternly.

"Ought I to have been with you along?"

"You hadn't ought to go to a party unknownst to me."

"But you wasn't here to go with, Luther."

She didn't say it reproachfully or as though she lamented his absence!

"Who was givin' a party and astin' you without me?" he inquired.

"It wasn't just to say a party."

"You are got your party frock on. What was it if it wasn't a party?"

"Oh, well—" Her reply was smothered behind the frivolous pink gown which she slipped over her head.

"I've been layin' here for hours and hours waitin' for you!" he reproached her, realizing with a start that it was he, not she, that was doing the reproaching!

"I don't act that way when you're off; I take and read," she said.

"You expec' me to lay here readin' the Bible when I don't even know where you're at, at twelve o'clock at night!"

"Well, I don't know where *you* was at to-night or last night, and it don't bother me any."

"Oh, it don't, don't it?"

"No. Why should it? Where was you?"

"This is what comes of givin' women the wote—they think they are got as good a right to ast that question of their husbands as to have it ast of them! It's neither here nor there where I was at!"

"Oh, all right," she said soothingly. "I don't care where you was at."

"Oh, you don't, don't you? Well, I do care where you was at. Where was you?"

"It's neither here nor there where I was at," she gayly quoted him.

"Lookahere, Ellie, if you run around Virginsville wearin' a frock like that there, without your mister along, folks'll talk!"

"Well, if I got to choose between havin' a good time and folks not talkin', gimme the good time!"

"You don't sound like yourself, Ellie!"

"You don't near know me, Luther!"

"What—what do you mean?" he faltered. "What fur a good time was you havin' to-night?"

"The best time I ever had!" she smiled as she tripped out of the room into the adjoining bathroom, where he heard her humming as she washed her face and hands. Humming!

He wondered whether it would be expedient to exercise his marital authority and demand an answer to his question.

"Trouble is," he reflected, "I've got her all spoiled up by fallin' in with this here modern fad of treatin' my wife like an equal; that's what's the trouble!"

That she actually didn't *care* to know where he had spent the last two evenings! This was not the way his brothers' wives took their husbands' unexplained absences from home.

Well, he certainly would keep an eye on her goings-on! But to doubt Ellie's faithful devotion was to doubt life itself!

"Say, Ellie," he said as she came back into the room, "now you mind I tell you, if you act so reckless as what you done to-night, next thing you know folks'll be talkin' down on you something awful!"

"I'd a lot sooner folks would talk against me than pity me! I'd sooner they'd pity you than me, Luther!" was her enigmatic retort.

Luther's s'umbers that night were intermittent, feverish, broken by long hours of sleeplessness, during which he reflected miserably upon those words, "I'd sooner they'd pity you than me!"

The next evening Luther made no move to go out, but settled himself by the lamp in the "setting room" to read the newspaper, a furtive eye on Ellen, whose bubbling sprightliness during their three meals together that day had filled him with black doubts. What was the secret source of this spirit of gaiety? What business had she to be so happy when she ought to be weeping over his neglect?

"Ain't you goin' out to-night?" she inquired, coming in from the kitchen after clearing away the supper.

He noted that she had on her "Sunday serge," as she called it; a frock she never wore on week days except to a funeral.

"Nope," he answered.

"Why not?"

He was not mistaken; her tone expressed disappointment, even a shade of annoyance.

"I'm stayin' home with you, Ellie."

"You needn't to bother about me, Luther, if you want to go off," she said urgently. "I won't have lonesome."

"Oh, you won't, won't you?"

"Oh, no, indeed I won't," she eagerly reassured him.

"Indeed!"

"Och, well!" she exclaimed with suppressed irritation, turning away. Ellie speaking "ugly" to him!

Instead of settling to her sewing, she moved about the room restlessly, rearranging cushions, ornaments, straightening pictures.

"Why don't you set down?" he asked her.

Obediently she sat down, squarely in front of him, her hands folded in her lap.

He resumed his paper.

In a moment she was on her feet again, going to the window, peeping out, drawing the blind up and down, fussing at the curtain.

"What's the matter of you, Ellie?"

"I don't know. Ain't you goin' out? Don't you have to go out somewhere?"

"You act like as if you wanted to get rid of me!"

"No, of course not," she said with quite obvious insincerity. "But—but you know, Luther, when you take a walk after supper you ain't so apt to be kep' awake with that there insomnia or whatever."

"All right. Get your things on."

"Oh, I don't feel for takin' a walk."

"Oh, you don't, don't you? Well, then, neither do I," he said, returning to his paper.

Ellen came to the table, took up a magazine, turned the pages, cast it aside. She breathed a long, audible sigh as she turned away and walked slowly the length of the room.

"By Hooley!" thought Luther miserably. "What the dickens anyhow?"

"What have you got on your Sunday serge for?" he asked.

"Oh, because."

"Some reason!"

She turned away and left the room.

Luther tried to read the newspaper, but he found himself listening intently for her return.

He waited for a long time, but she

did not come back. What on earth could she be doing with herself? So few and so circumscribed were the activities of these people that each of them knew at any hour of the day and night exactly where the other was, what they were doing, almost what they were thinking. The only normal place for Ellie to be after supper was in this "setting room." Unless she were ill, she wouldn't be upstairs at half past six in the evening. Unless she had company she wouldn't be in the parlor. Unless she was "laying over her bread to raise," she would not, at this hour, be in the kitchen, and this was not baking day. Her absence from her husband's side just now constituted a mystery. It was unwifely.

Presently, unable to bear it any longer, Luther threw down his newspaper, rose, and went to look for her.

But he did not find her, for she was not in the house.

She was, at that moment, walking down the village street bent upon an errand which required almost more courage and resolution than she could muster, intrepid though she was.

Ellen's environment in her girlhood home with her parents had been such that her present situation in relation to her husband did not find her helpless, bewildered, unprepared. All her life she had seen her mother suffer, fume, and fret over her father's philandering and neglect; she had seen her father bury himself in his business slavishly in order to escape the moist and gloomy atmosphere of his home; she had seen her elder sister squander two years of her youth in weeping over her husband's growing coldness.

Ellie had, therefore, early come to the conclusion that she would never let any man rob her life of its joy.

"No man is *worth* crying for, for two years!" she had hotly told herself.

She determined that she would always hold herself aloof from an all-engross-



She moved about the room restlessly, rearranging cushions, ornaments, straightening pictures.
"Why don't you set down?" he asked her.

ing love; she would not let herself go; she would keep herself well in hand. Even if she married, she would not give herself utterly, as she knew she was capable of doing. She would have other interests besides her home and her husband; she would improve her mind, so that when the inevitable cooling of love, on the part of her husband, should come it would not find her as it found most women, stranded high and dry like a fish on a mountaintop, gasping, dying.

"I'll have something to occupy myself with besides my husband's love," she had resolved.

So her marriage with Luther Lichter had not been, on her side, an overwhelming love match, though it certainly had been on his. To her it had been only a very satisfactory, workable comradeship, in which she had found contentment and even much happiness.

But when the inevitable had happened—and she had seen it creeping upon her for some months past—all her resolu-

tions had seemed to dissolve into thin air; an icy hand had seemed to grip her heart; she had awakened to the fact that, in spite of all her cynical wisdom, she had come to love Luther with all her soul. He was her whole life. She knew that to keep him for her own she would fight with all the strength of her being.

But the experiences of her own mother and her sister had taught her how unavailing their way of fighting had been. Never, never would she further alienate Luther by showing him what she knew his masculine vanity would expect to be shown, a wounded, bleeding heart. She must find some means, *effectual* means, for holding him to herself.

Ellen was rather an astute young woman, and she perceived that it was the very danger of losing Luther that had fanned her own mild love for him into a blaze. She also recognized that the most potent element in her mind, at this crisis, in keeping her love blaz-

ing, was curiosity—a great, big question mark, first, as to where it was and with whom Luther spent those evenings away from her; second, as to what were his feelings toward Flossie Flicklinger and hers toward him. How much did they care for each other? To what lengths would they go? What attractions did Flossie have that she, Luther's own wife, lacked? Curiosity, uncertainty, the danger of losing him—these had all been burning fagots to her love.

Why not try these same fagots upon Luther's cooling devotion toward her instead of the futile reproaches that he would expect?

So, last night she had dressed in her pink party frock, and at half past ten, the hour at which she knew Luther would be wandering in, she had put on a coat, wound a pink scarf around her dark hair, turned off all the lights in the house, and had gone to sit on the back stairway leading down into the kitchen, until such time as Luther, having discovered her absence, would feel himself consumed with curiosity and uncertainty that when she would at last pretend to let herself in at the front door and would appear before him in all her splendor of pink georgette and gleaming white neck and shoulders, she would have become an object of such interest in his eyes as she had not been these many weeks.

It had all gone off without a hitch, and now this evening she was about to carry out the second part of her campaign.

"When Flossie Flickinger sees me at her door," she thought as she walked the length of Virginsville to Mrs. Sam Flickinger's home, "she'll conceit that I've come to upbraid her or to plead with her. Oh, won't she get one surprise, unless she ain't so dumb as what Luther is and so easy took in!"

She hoped Sam Flickinger would not be at home.

When she reflected upon the sort of woman for whom Luther was slighting her, she thought ruefully how little it weighed with a man for a woman to do her whole duty by him. Flossie was an idle, empty-headed creature whose only occupation seemed to be to hang pretty and expensive clothes upon her worthless body. She refused to cook her husband's meals, so they "et at the hotel;" she refused to clean his house, so the one and only charwoman of Virginsville came once a week to sweep and dust for her. Sam made "good money" and was infinitely indulgent. During all the long summer days and evenings, Flossie, clad in pretty dresses and much jewelry, would sit in a rocking-chair on her front porch, with never a book or a bit of sewing to break her blissful idleness; and the winter days and evenings she spent sitting in the same rocking-chair before her "setting-room" stove.

"How do you spend your time, since you take your meals at the hotel?" Ellen had curiously asked Flossie one evening last summer when she had sat with her for a little while on her porch.

"Oh, settin' 'round."

"Don't you find it tiresome?"

"Nope. I like it."

"I'd simply die if I hadn't anything to do," Ellen had said.

"I like settin' 'round."

"But—but, Mrs. Flickinger, do you think it's right for any one to live without workin'?"

"Lots do."

"But it makes a person so—so dumb, just settin' 'round."

"Oh, I don' know."

"I believe you'd be a lot happier if you was useful."

"I'm happy enough. Nothin' I'd sooner do than set here and watch the autos goin' by and the folks passin'."

"It would make me wild," declared Ellen.

"It would make me wilder to have

to work. Why should I work when Sam can afford to hire for me? Why should any woman work if she don't have to? Sam don't care if I don't work any. Oh, well, I do work at something sometimes, a little. I sew Sam's buttons on, sometimes."

Ellen wondered whether she would feel less or more piqued if the woman to whom her Luther had turned were her own superior, instead of what she was. It was certainly not flattering to have him give her up for such as Flossie.

When at length she reached the Flickingers' house, she saw that the parlor windows were lighted, a sure sign in any home of Virginsville that company was expected.

"My goodness!" she thought. "It looks as if Flossie's expecting Luther again this evening yet!"

In answer to her knock on the door, Flossie flung it wide, with the boisterous greeting:

"Hello, Lutie!"

Ellen stepped from the darkness of the porch into the hall, dimly lighted from the parlor.

"Och, my souls!" gasped Flossie. "Oh," she giggled helplessly, "if this ain't one on me!"

"Ain't!" laughed Ellen, as though hugely enjoying the joke with her rival, though she was trembling with fright before the bold, daring adventure on which she was launched. "Luther'll be along after whiles, dearie. I come on ahead."

Flossie stopped giggling and stared stupidly. Dearie? And the reassuring, caressing tone in which she was informed that this woman's husband would be "along after whiles!" What did it mean?

"Oh, Mrs. Flickinger!" laughed Ellen. "I got the funniest favor to ast off of you!"

"Come on in, then, and set down."

Flossie led the way into the parlor.

"Leave me tell you right now, missus," said the lady of the house defiantly, as she and her visitor seated themselves opposite each other on black haircloth-covered chairs, "that if the favor you want to ast off of me is for me to keep Lutie Lichter from comin' here to see me evenings, why, *nothin' doin'*! It's up to you to keep him at home; it ain't up to me to chase him back to you. I should worry!"

"Oh, but I don't want you to chase him away! Just the contrary! I want you to keep it up. You see me and Luther has a bet, and I want you to help me to win the bet, if you'll be so kind. For if I win it, Luther's got to get me the fur set that I've been wantin' this good whiles back a'ready, such a bear-fur set, awful swell!"

"And what is this here bet?" asked Flossie in mingled doubt and hauteur.

"Well, you see, missus, Luther's an awful modest man about hisself, *too* modest, I always tell him, so here one day lately I was tryin' to put some conceit into him by tellin' him that I didn't know any woman, married *or* single, that wouldn't fall in love with him if he gave 'em an opportunity. But no, he didn't believe it. He don't even see what I see in him to like so well! So I sayed, 'Take Mrs. Sam Flickinger, for instance—as stylish and pretty a woman as her yet!—she'd fall in love with you, Lutie, if you'd give her half a chance to.' No, he sayed, you wouldn't do nothing of the kind, that you was *above* that kind of thing, that he had too much respec' for you to think it of you, you a married lady."

"Well, I'm blest!" breathed Flossie.

"Yes, ain't!" laughed Ellen. "So I insisted you would fall in love with him and we come near havin' words about it. So, then, Luther he sayed he'd prove me in the wrong, and if I was right I was to have them furs. So then, last night and the night before he come to try it out on you, but to-



"Well, say, of all the nerve!" began Flossie. "What do you think I am, anyhow?"

night he wouldn't do it to come again, no matter how hard I coaxed. He said he was ashamed to come up here again and play with the affections of a confiding, innocent, unsuspecting little thing like you and make a fool of himself and you. He wouldn't do it, not for the sake of proving *nothing* to me! And, missus," said Ellen, her lips and eyebrows suggesting tears, "I'm afraid I'm not a-goin' to win my bet and get my fur coat."

"Coat! You said *set*!"

"Set. Yes. Say, Mrs. Flickinger, won't you help me win it?"

"Well, say, of all the nerve!" began Flossie.

"Oh, *do* flirt with Lutie just a little bit more, *won't* you, missus? I want that fur set so!"

"You and your fur set! What do you think I am, anyhow?"

"I'll do as much for you some day!" coaxed Ellen. "Oh, please! If I can't get him to come up here *this* evening

any more, how about to-morrow evening? Will you——"

"Mister don't work to-morrow evening. He's home. Lutie darsen't come to-morrow."

"Oh, I'll undertake to keep Sam Flickinger out of the way, missus, the same as I done last night and the night be——"

"Och!" said Flossie, sitting forward suddenly in her chair. "Is that where Sam Flickinger was on his off night, when he tol' me he had to work an ext'r night? Larkin' 'round with you! Well, of all the nerve!"

"Oh, well, it was just so as I could win this fur set off of Luther, missus. Me and Sam," added Ellen, looking down in some confusion, "didn't mean nothing."

"Didn't mean nothing! You must want that fur set awful bad! If I wanted such a fur set, Sam Flickinger would buy it for me. I wouldn't have to go out and flirt with another woman's man to win a *bet* to get it! Well, I guess anyhow not! I'd thank you to leave my husband be, Mrs. Luther Lichter!"

"After I win my bet——"

"Nothin' doin'!" cried Flossie. "I'll give Sam Flickinger a piece of my mind when he gets home!" she exclaimed so fiercely that Ellen's heart threatened to stop beating, in her terror of Sam Flickinger's amazement at his wife's false charges.

"Oh, well, if you're a-goin' to take it like that!" she murmured, rising hastily and making for the door.

"How would you expec' me to take it? My mister runnin' 'round with a pretty young married girl like you! Expec' me to stand for it, would you?"

"But I don't mind Luther's coming here to see you," argued Ellen as she opened the front door.

"Oh, you don't, don't you? You're so awful sure of him, are you? Well, you tell your mister from me that he didn't fool me for a minute, that I seen right through his coming love-makin' and was just leadin' him on!"

"Of course you must have seen through it, missus, as dumb as what Luther must have went at it! He couldn't have fooled you any, I'm sure. You ain't so dumb as all that! But, dearie, if you'd only keep it up for a couple more evenings till I get my fur set once!"

"Drop that fur-set stunt!" cried Flossie angrily. "I ain't no cat's-paw for gettin' another girl a fur set! Nothin' to it! You go on home and tell your simp of a husband that he didn't make no fool of me; he only queered *hissself* in my eyes! You tell him——"

"All right, I will," interrupted Ellen obligingly as she stepped out to the porch and flew down the steps.

"Now," she thought gleefully, though her teeth chattered with nervousness, "if Luther ever goes there again, I got it fixed good for him!"

Suppose Sam Flickinger confronted her with Flossie's accusation! What on earth could she say? Tell him the truth? The truth would be pleasant for a change!

But she had a more immediate difficulty to grapple with than Mr. Flickinger's bewilderment. She had perhaps won Luther back for the time being. But one could not keep up such behavior, subterfuge, tricks, deception! Not upon such foundations was built a love worthy the sacred name.

"If love is so easy lost and won, is it worth fighting for? Worth the awful

effort? Marriage has got to be built up on something stronger and deeper, seems to me, to be worth saving," thought Ellen. "If it ain't, I'd just as soon leave it go! I don't want the cheap, poor thing!"

When she reached home, she found Luther in a state of collapse, lying prone upon the settee against the wall.

At her entrance he sat up with a jerk and stared at her with eyes which looked almost bloodshot. There was an expression of suffering in them that smote Ellen's heart.

"Where was you, Ellie?"

"Oh, up the street a piece-ways."

"Where to? Why can't you tell me?"

"I went up to ast Flossie Flickinger about such a fur coat—set—I seen; she's a good authority on such things."

"Flossie Flickinger ain't the kind of woman my wife is to visit," said Luther disapprovingly.

Ellen had the good sense to suppress the retort which sprang to her lips: "Then she ain't the kind of woman my husband is to visit!"

What she wisely said was:

"Don't talk down on Flossie, Luther. She's as nice a little woman as she otherwise can be. I wouldn't want a nicer friend."

"A false friend, Ellie! And common as dirt! I don't want my wife to have nothing to do with her!"

"I like her very much, Luther; she makes an awful jolly friend to travel with, to funerals and pitcher shows and prayer meetings and other entertainments that you don't feel for goin' to along."

"You ain't to! You don't know that woman, Ellie!"

"Don't I?" thought Ellie.

"I'd think, Ellie, as smart as what you are, you'd *see* what she is. And as refined as what you are, I'd think you'd *feel* what she is!"

Ellie compressed her lips, while her face grew crimson, and suddenly she

broke down and laughed breathlessly, helplessly.

"What's so funny?" demanded Luther indignantly. "I don't see nothing funny."

"That's what's so funny! That you don't see through nothing! I think, Lutie, I'll write such an article for the woman's page of the Virginsville *Eagle*, called "How to Keep a Husband Faithful, By Ellen Lich—"

"Say! Don't you sign your own name to no sich a article!" exclaimed Luther, alarmed. "I'd feel too cheap!"

"I'll sign it D. D. D., Dare-Devil Dame."

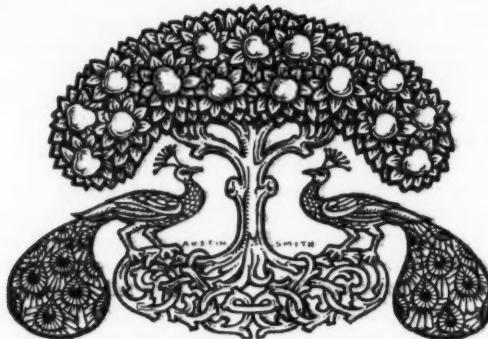
Luther stared for a minute, then suddenly roared with laughter.

Springing up from the sofa, he caught her in his arms.

"Och, Ellie, a man couldn't never find things very slow with *you* 'round! Other women's awful slow alongside of you; that I got to give you!"

Later that evening, as Ellie and Luther were in the sitting room, Ellie commented conclusively:

"After all, even if us women has got the vote now, the thing that most of us wants, more than anything else in the world, is a home and children. They're worth a struggle to keep, anyhow!"



LIFE MOTIONLESS

THINGS motionless are eloquent of life,
More eloquent, in truth, than things that move.
The dizzy whirl of daily toil and strife,
That will not rest, is not for me: I love
The life that quickens in the new-born grass,
That climbs to heaven in a budding tree;
A life so still we may not hear it pass,
And so remote we marvel that we see.

More living lingers in a calm deep lake
Than all the noisy winds that pass above,
And more of life in lives that do not make
So great a task of living. So I love,
More than your hands that minister to me,
Your quiet eyes, that worship silently.

HELEN FRAZEE-BOWER.

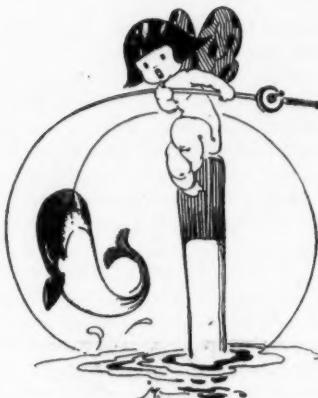
Flutter By

By Valma Clark

Author of "Ye Nut-Brown Maid," "The Middle of the Tale," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. T. DENISON

Young Professor Garth's theory on the soul-color of woman gets a tragic upset when he meets a "neutral-gray" who turns out to be "orange, with a glimmer of green and a dash of red."



THIS is a story about a modern girl. The girl was Fern Jardine, and she sat among chintz cushions in a corner of the summer hotel's informal living room, while the new guest, Trevor Maxwell Garth, Ph.D., expert in feminine types, danced past with her cousin, Sophie Duer, and failed to note that she was a modern girl—failed to see her at all, in fact.

The truth is, young Garth was very much occupied with his partner. Sophie was one of those childish, Dresden-shepherdess blondes, whose daring evening gowns are anything but childish or Dresden shepherdess in effect; she had a continuous, tinkly laugh and she said amusingly shocking things, which were the more amusing from her youthful lips. An artist, who had an eye for the picturesque—a woman, by the way—once remarked that Miss Duer was all wrong: that if some sorceress would wave a wand over her, and silence her, and set her back in her Chelsea vase in stiff pompadour silk where she belonged, she would be a lovely thing to look at. Written all over Sophie's frivolous, cerise-silk person was the label, "Light Summer Fiction," and summer fiction—the lighter the better—was what Trevor Maxwell Garth, Ph.D., was seeking at the moment.

"Soul of gilt," Garth's brain had registered instantly when he was introduced to Miss Duer. "Amazingly young, hardly more than seventeen. Ought to be spanked and sent to bed." Whereupon he had bowed and requested a dance, even as he added a further mental note to the effect that Miss Duer achieved the irresistible blend of dewy freshness and dainty sophistication—moreover, entirely kissable.

The music washed them up into the chintz corner and left them there.

"Matter, Fern, old dear? Bored?" asked Sophie carelessly, dropping into a wicker chair.

Fern shrugged, murmured something indeterminate.

"Oh, my cousin, Mr. Garth. Mr. Garth, Miss Jardine."

"Delighted," said Garth. Methodically he catalogued her: colorless, smooth black hair, almond eyes, gray, a rather small person. "Neutral gray," he muttered, unaware that he spoke aloud; quite definitely he turned to Miss Duer, who was chattering on.

The effect of the two words upon Fern Jardine was remarkable. She sat up indignantly.

"'Neutral gray,' is it! Well, I'll be—" Her slant eyes narrowed, and as she studied Garth's Greek profile,

the colorless face took on an elfin look, and she chuckled once, a dry little sound.

To those who know the language of soul-coloring—and who in this day has not heard of the famous Garth theory?—Fern's resentment would have been justified. For Garth was not an ordinary Ph.D. He had chosen as the topic for his doctor's thesis, "The Emotionalism of Women." Already he had done original work in phrenology and physiognomy, had linked them with psychology, and had published his theory of soul colorings, in which he held that every woman has her own distinctive soul's color—whether it be the yellow of life and buoyancy or the red of passion or the blue of coldness or the purple of quietness and mystic twilight or some other one color. To those who argued that women are too complex to be reduced to a single color, that the soul of every woman possesses all the colors of the spectrum, Garth replied dogmatically that woman's complexity is an old superstition based upon mere outward manifestations; he had maintained that, for all her chameleon surface changes, woman remains fundamentally true to her predominating soul color.

Rather a pretty little theory if Garth had stopped there! But he held that underneath the sham in women, he, Garth, could detect her real soul color; from her face, he could tell whether she was a violet woman or a gray woman or a scarlet woman. A bit of an assumption on Garth's part!

Add to this the fact that he had just rounded out a year's lecturing before women's clubs with the publishing of his book, "Types of Women and How to Know Them"—a popular book, written down to the public. Add the further facts that he was one of the youngest Ph.D.'s, that his build was athletic and his features were darkly handsome, that he had packed his array of white

flannels and come off for a two weeks' lark, ready to let himself go, before he should plunge again into work, and finally, that his coming had been much heralded at Ragged Edge Hotel, and that men were scarce there anyhow, and Garth's instant popularity is explained.

Two days later, Garth escaped from porch-cooing women and the gilt-souled Sophie, who had already begun to pall, and lost himself, in his canoe, among the thirty thousand islands of Georgian Bay. Eventually he wandered into a cool, shaded little channel far from sputtering motor boats, and paused to consider a girl drifting in a green canoe, a girl in a pale-green sweater affair under a medium-green parasol against a background of deep-green spruce.

"What is it, a study in greens?" asked Mr. Garth.

The girl turned a page of her magazine, covered a yawn with the tips of her fingers, and glanced at him casually.

"It is rather good, isn't it?" she admitted. Her face was small, colorless; her slant eyes were green, jade green.

"Only the parasol is unnecessary, isn't it?"

"Completes the harmony. I'm glad you happened along to appreciate it, Mr.—er—Mr.—"

"Garth," he supplied, with a slight frown for her ignorance.

"Oh, Garth! Trevor Maxwell Garth, Ph.D.? Stupid of me. You understand women; can read 'em straight off?"

"Well—" He did not deny it: there was even a certain condescension and complacence in the smile he bestowed upon her.

"It's awfully clever of you, Mr. Garth." The girl answered his smile, and when she smiled, something happened to her face, and he discovered



"You are very pretty," he was saying. "But I wonder if you're not a flutter by."

that she was not at all insignificant looking. Elfin, impish, what was it? Garth would have been interested to know that in college dramatics she had always played *Puck*.

"Won't you have a chocolate, Mr. Garth? They're soft centers; very bad,

but still—" Their canoes rubbed; she smiled at him again, and he warned himself that he must go carefully. Garth's wisdom in women was not alone the wisdom of the student; he had made careful, but discreet laboratory experiments in the individual, and while

he had assured himself that these affairs were conducted purely in the interest of science, he realized that he was not altogether unsusceptible.

"What are you reading?" he asked, shifting his eyes to her magazine.

"Not reading. It's a fashion magazine. I'm planning my fall wardrobe. There's a darling gray kitten's ear, but gray's hardly my color. What do you think, Mr. Garth?"

"Um-m."

"You might read my character," she continued impulsively. "Please do! Am I total froth, or have I weight; mere sea foam, or will I make an anchor for some good man-o'-war some day? Come on, be frank. Don't mind me."

"Well"—he glanced from the fashion book to the girl's face, studied her seriously—"you have an intelligent forehead," he mused; "undeveloped possibilities, I should say."

"Undeveloped possibilities of intelligence?" she asked innocently. "That is nice of you, Mr. Garth. And the soul color?"

"You are, I think, green."

"Green? Ah, that's better. But not so very subtle of you," she mocked.

"The green of springtime and sea nymphs and Corot trees, and all young, growing things," he continued dreamily. "What is your name?"

"My name is Fern."

"It would be. Delicate patterns of green lace—."

"Fern Jardine."

"Jardine? I seem to have heard it before."

"Yes?" She was laughing at him. "I am Sophie's cousin, the one you didn't dance with. Perhaps you will remember—*neutral gray*, the other night."

He stared at her.

"I was wrong," he admitted. "You are not gray. I am occasionally wrong."

"Really?"

Silver mornings, white-birch trees, and the song of a white-throated sparrow; golden afternoons, heat, balsam fragrance, and a lazy white sail; starlit evenings, tinkle of mandolins and the call of a whippoorwill. Affairs of this sort move swiftly at Georgian Bay, where an entire summer is a matter of moments, a flash of sunlight on blue waters and a shimmer of moonlight on purple waters. And so it happened that two weeks later, near the end of his brief vacation, Garth drifted in a canoe with Fern Jardine over the open bay, far out from the islands, and said:

"Last night I kissed you. When am I going to kiss you again? That is one of the difficulties of a canoe."

Fern reclined against cushions and trailed one hand in the water and looked helpless and feminine.

"I'm not sure that you are going to kiss me again. It was rather nice—once." Her green eyes slanted up at him. "You know, you are a disappointment; in some ways, so much nicer than I'd imagined. It's hard to be cruel to you. I wonder whether I'm going to be able to carry it through."

But Garth was not listening.

"You are very pretty," he was saying; "smooth black hair of a madonna and the eyes and mouth of a pixy or something pagan. But I wonder if you're not a flutter by."

"Flutter by?"

"Butterfly—flutter by. That's the derivation. Pat, eh? But it's this surface stuff I'm driving at. You say you skim books, glance at headlines, read the reviews instead of the novels themselves."

"And I read smart magazines for conversation; didn't I say that? Here's a little essay on the art of clever fibbing: 'Honesty is the worst possible policy'; 'Candied cherries are much the nicest, don't you think?' Sure to come in some time. I remember and quote it at Mr. Lorillard when I'm stuck

beside him through a dinner, and I get the reputation of being clever without any effort at all. Here's another article on the blue laws; that comes in handy with Mr. Not. You get the system?"

"I get it! And then religion; you admit that a fairly decent church attendance and a prayerful attitude pass current in your set for religion."

"Did I say that, too?" she chuckled. "Yes, morality, religion, those things carried beyond the point where they show, are folly, don't you think?"

"What's the use of putting lace on your pantalets, if it doesn't show?" he murmured whimsically. "That was my old aunt's creed. Religion, those things are mere edgings, eh? What's the use of putting edging on your character if it doesn't show?"

"Only they're knickers to-day, you know," she interrupted flippantly.

He rested the paddle to light a cigarette.

"When I was in France, there was a girl—"

"Isn't there usually?"

"Listen!" he commanded sharply. "It was in *Le Jupon Rouge*, one of those little places that tries to be racy and succeeds only in being pathetic, and I was taking in the sights with some of the other chaps in my division. This girl was one of those professionals who come and sit at your table and entertain you. She picked on us and jabbered a jargon of French at us that we couldn't understand, and when she got up to go she demanded her tip. Partly as a joke—not feeling that the entertainment had been worth much in our case—I gave her a bad coin that some one had passed off on me. She discovered it and came back and demanded good money. She had me, you see, for passing on counterfeit money, and she knew that she had me; she lived by her wits, was on to all the tricks in her trade. She was hard and

shrewd, half-starved, and not pleasant to look at. She'd got her philosophy from knocks in a mucky, sordid world. But she didn't pretend to be what she wasn't. I'm not sure I don't prefer her kind."

"You haven't much of an opinion of women for all your poetic theories about them," she accused abruptly.

"Plato," he replied, "was the first to say 'Woman is an undeveloped man.' I agree with Plato."

"Plato would be flattered."

"Only I'd say she's exceedingly undeveloped. She has years to go before she'll reach man. But I'll be boring you with talk of Plato," he remembered.

"Out of my depth," she agreed sweetly. She glanced up. Her eyes wavered between green and gray: tabby eyes or dove eyes, which? Ah, they were green! Her laugh rippled out.

"You're a witch," declared Garth earnestly; "I'm keen for you. But you've never known anything but shallow situations. What would you do in deep water? Would you grasp at the straws of cynicism and a church hymn, or would you——"

"Would I what? Funny how the waves break here when it's calm out there," she murmured irrelevantly. "Deep water, did you say? It would be an interesting experiment, wouldn't it? Well, why don't you try it?" It was a challenge and a dare that she flashed him.

"I'm considering it," he answered steadily. "We're alone in a waste of water with nary a sail in sight. The nearest island's that yellow patch about a half mile to the left, and you're a fair little swimmer, Fern."

"Only soso," she qualified modestly.

"And I'm the biggest fool going. Get ready for a ducking, Fern; we're going to swim for it!"

"Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," she began with appropriate



"Oh!" she sputtered. "It's my new sports skirt and I swallowed gallons. You beast! You deserve——"

gestures. But the warm waters of the bay closed over the gestures and the words ended in a gurgle. She came up gasping for air, and among bobbing cushions and overturned canoe, she found the sleek head of Trevor Maxwell Garth, Ph.D.

"Well?" he drawled, grinning at her.

"Oh!" she sputtered. "It's my new sports skirt and I swallowed gallons. You beast! You deserve——"

Quite suddenly, she threw up both arms, uttered a piercing shriek, and went under. She came up sobbing, choking for breath, managed a strangle hold upon his neck, and they went down together. It was the nauseating exhibition of a woman who loses her head and makes a complete spectacle of herself, the sort of thing that forever after sickens you with the person.

Some moments later, Garth found himself hanging to the canoe with one hand, beating her off with the other.

"You damned fool!" he gritted. "Do you want to drown us both? Pull yourself together, and grab the canoe. I'm going to save that little pink-tea body

of yours, if you'll let me get my breath!"

"But I'm c-cold," she chattered, obeying him to the extent of clinging to the canoe, but still clutching at him. "I don't want to swim; I can't swim. Don't you think there might be s-shoals here, the way the w-waves break?"

"Shoals? By Jove, you might be right. You stick to the canoe," he ordered curtly. "If you let go——" He was off, investigating.

There were shoals. Although he was something of an expert with canoes, Garth never knew how he accomplished the feat of righting the boat, half emptying it, and getting the girl in. Standing waist-deep in water on a slippery footing, swearing at her, he forced her to help him, while she kept up a weak sobbing.

He dumped her out at the nearest island and ignored her while he built a brushwood fire on a little cliff. She sighed contentedly as she stretched herself before the crackling blaze.

"This is nice," she murmured drowsily.

Silent, Garth stared at her, contempt bitten into his face; wet strands of hair and plastered silk—merely a drenched little coward, she was, lapping up the luxury of heat like a cat. The steam rose from his own tweeds and the odor of wet wool filled the air.

"It was horrid of you," she chuckled, wriggling closer.

Garth moved definitely away from her.

"Nice view," she tried again after a rather longer silence, in which she had propped her elbows on the mossy edge of their cliff and studied the green depths of the water below. "That nearest point's the mainland, isn't it? And the blot down the shore is the hotel. Messy-looking object, I am. Glad I don't have to face them. We can land and walk around and slide in the back way, and anyway, we'll be dry."

"Still worrying about appearances! Bah! I'm only interested in getting you safely back without a cold in your little head, though Heaven knows you're not worth it.

"There's a sequel to the story of that Frenchwoman," he continued harshly; "an ugly story, and you're going to hear it now. There was an air raid in Paris that night, and the girl was buried alive. My pal was with her in the beastly hole where she lived. Oh, you're right in the thing you're thinking—those things did happen when the fellows got leave. The house caved in on them. Somehow my pal escaped. He saw her writhing beneath heaped-up plaster, and tried to get at her. She signaled him to clear out, made him understand that it was hopeless. Then another section went. She was dead, of course, when he got to her. Sounds improbable to *you*, eh? Well, it's melodrama, but it's true enough. Underneath her paint and her nastiness, she was a regular girl, and she died game. And that painted woman's worth about six of you, do you understand? Oh, I admit I liked

you, but I wouldn't marry you now if you were the last woman in the world!"

An amazing change came over Fern Jardine. All her helpless indolence vanished; she sat up with abrupt energy, and like a small terrier, she shook the damp hair from her eyes.

"That has been said before," she pointed out in a low, controlled voice, "in every strong-man drama since the days of Shakespeare. Can't you think of something original? 'Marry,' did you say? I wouldn't marry *you* if you were Adam and I were Eve, and the whole beastly, jolly world depended on it. So *that's* settled.

"And now be still. I've been listening to you for two solid weeks and now you're going to listen to me! It was your conceit and your tight smugness that started me at first, your air of dropping down among us and looking us over, like a connoisseur of women. I thought it would be fun to bait you and show you up for what you were. You wanted to play—I could see that—so I gave you the silly, clinging vine you liked—"

"You mean—"

"Oh, I staged the whole show"—impatiently—"from the green parasol on. It was easy enough. Only then I found you rather decent, and I funk'd letting you down as I'd planned. Even today, when you swore at me, I liked you; you seemed red-blooded and virile, all that. I'm fairly good at dramatics, you'll have to admit; I played the drowning act well. And you did ruin my new skirt and I wasn't letting you off too easy."

She rose suddenly, stood over him. He had mistaken her smallness for delicacy; now he was conscious of strength and poise and a well-knit harmony of body.

"I can paddle a canoe better than you can, Mr. Trevor Maxwell Garth, Ph.D.," she stated coldly; "it happens

that I'm something of an athlete myself. I can keep my head in a situation better than you can. Who was it thought of the shoals I'd like to know? I could even build up pretty theories better than you, if I wanted to waste my time that way; I've added a few terse epigrams and a brand-new type of cad to my observations on men, since I met you.

"It wasn't Plato who said 'Woman is an undeveloped man.' It was Socrates. And anyhow he was wrong, and times have changed since his day." She paused for one breath.

"But—" began Garth, moistening his lips.

She fixed a cold eye upon him and continued disdainfully:

"As for this shallow-water line you've been pulling, I've had a few deep-sea adventures of my own, and I've taken 'em head on all right. I'm not saying your little French lady wasn't a heroine, but we all did base-hospital work and some of us were more or less shelled and nobody even

bothers to talk about it. Yes, even Sophie fibbed about her age and got over, for all her kid looks."

Suddenly she pulled up and grinned at him impishly, maddeningly.

"I started out to make a fool of you, Mr. Garth, and I'm quite through. And now—"

She kicked off her low shoes and stepped to the edge of the cliff, while Garth watched her, fascinated, unable to move. Slowly she raised slim arms above her head. For a single moment she stood on tiptoe, poised, beautiful—a small thing, perfectly done. Then she dropped in a straight, easy dive, took the water with scarcely a ripple, and was off for the mainland with a swift, overhand stroke.

"Good Lord!" breathed Trevor Maxwell Garth, sitting back on his heels. "She's orange with a glimmer of green and a dash of red and a—" And then he discovered that he was mixing his colors, and that was a thing which, according to his own theory, could not be done.



MIDSUMMER NIGHT

I KNOW a garden where the nightingale
Might love to linger with his tuneful lay;
For in the moonlight's ghostly silver ray,
A fountain flaunts its filmy, fairy veil,
The while the peacock furls his gorgeous tail
To dream of vanished splendors of the day.
The drowsy blossoms, once so blithe and gay,
Elusive, balmy perfumes now exhale
In fragrant breaths. Night magic reigns, and there
The dial stands, more than the rest bewitched.
Its gnomon, in the sway of lunar powers,
No longer tells the time with truthful care;
But, scorning numbers by the maker niched,
Marks but enchanted and enchanting hours.

BLANCHE ELIZABETH WADE.



A · CUP · OF · TEA

By Florence Ryerson

A Comedy in One Act.

Characters:

WILFORT WENDALL A poet
JANE His wife
AZALEA WARING A lady of artistic aspirations
JOHN Her husband

(As the curtain rises WILFORT is struggling with a poem at the desk in his study. He is more or less surrounded with crumpled sheets of paper. His hair and dress are in disorder. He is scribbling away, smoking as he works.)

WILFORT: Gold—gold—sold? (He shakes his head.) Mold? No, bold—used that. Fold—hold? Might use hold. (He refers to the paper in front of him.) Hold? No go! Roled—bowled—

JANE enters through the rear doorway. She is plump and comfortable, with a sort of cheerful, common-sense smile. She is clad in a house dress, covered with a large white apron. Her

sleeves are rolled up, and in her capable hands she carries a dish towel and a large, white-enamel spoon.)

WILFORT: Fold—fold—bold—I tried that. Sold—Oh, damn! (He throws down his pen and stalks over to the fireplace.)

JANE: Whew! What air! Why don't you open the windows? (She crosses to the French windows and throws them open.) What's the matter? Having a bad time?

WILFORT: I'm stuck. Been working all afternoon. Can't seem to get anywhere with the thing.

JANE: Too bad. Is it that sonnet for Whatche-may-call-um's magazine?

WILFORT: Yes. He's got to have it to-morrow. They want to use it on the title page with one of those color decorations. I can't seem to get on with it.

JANE: Suppose you put it away and help me can apricots for a while. Perhaps that will inspire you.

WILFORT: Why are you canning 'em to-day?

JANE: Because if I don't, there won't be any jam for breakfast, my love. And I learned early in our married life that it was a case of no jam, no sonnets. (*She turns to go.*) Coming?

WILFORT (*determinedly*): No. I think I'll take another crack at the thing. (*JANE goes out, throwing him a kiss off the end of the spoon.*)

JANE: Good luck!

WILFORT (*going back to his desk*): Gold—told—that'll do—told! (*He bends over paper and scribbles energetically. The telephone rings. He ignores it. It rings again. With a muffled "damn," he throws down his pen and crosses the room.*) Hello! Hello! . . . Oh! Azalea! Wait a minute! (*He goes to the doorway at the rear, looks into the room beyond, closes the portières, returns to the telephone, and speaks in a low voice.*) Azalea! You shouldn't call me here. . . . What—what! Your husband! . . . He found my letters! All of them? . . . Just the sonnets? . . . Good God! . . . No—no—NO! You mustn't—you can't come. My wife is here. What? . . . I say you mustn't. Hello—hello—central—you cut off! Oh, damn! (*He hangs up the receiver with a bang, strides desperately about the room. JANE draws aside portières at back and enters.*)

JANE: Why on earth are *these* shut? Oh! I thought I heard the telephone.

WILFORT: Yes—no—at least, it did ring—

JANE: Who called?

WILFORT (*desperately*): Wrong number. How about the apricots? Won't they burn if you don't stir 'em or something?

JANE: I've got them finished. I'll just dust the room. (*She crosses to the desk and takes a silk duster from a drawer. She notices paper he has been writing on.*) You aren't through, are

you? (*Reading*) "To My Lady of Gold." Who is she, Willy? Your last ladylove had red hair, didn't she?

WILFORT (*nervously*): No—black. At least, I—I think so—I don't exactly remember. (*He fidgets with the mantel ornaments.*)

JANE: For goodness' sake, sit down! You needn't get upset like that. I'm not objecting. I suppose a poet must have affairs, and I must say this for you, Willy—they never last long enough to make me nervous. But some day, my dear, some day you'll run up against a husband and come a cropper!

WILFORT (*wildly*): Oh! (*He drops a vase and smashes it.*)

JANE: There! Now you've done it! What does make you so nervous? Here! You'd better sit down. (*She pushes him on to the hassock.*) What's wrong, Willy?

WILFORT (*clinging to her skirt*): Jane! I—I—I've got—

JANE: Why, you're trembling like a leaf!

WILFORT: I've got to tell you.

JANE: There, there! Go ahead and tell me.

WILFORT (*wailing*): It's—it's another woman!

JANE (*breathing a sigh of relief*): Oh! Is that all? I thought it was something serious.

WILFORT: He—he found my letters.

JANE: Who—what letters?

WILFORT: Her husband. He found some sonnets I'd sent her.

JANE: Why will women leave things around? (*She sweeps the scraps of vase from the hearth and looks at them thoughtfully.*) I don't think it's entirely smashed, Willy. I can stick it together with glue.

WILFORT (*tragically*): How can you stand there talking about a thing like that when I'm telling you about Azalea—

JANE: Azalea?

WILFORT: Azalea Waring — the woman with the husband.

JANE: Oh, that one! Well, why get upset about it? It's her affair. She's got to settle it with her husband.

WILFORT: But she's coming here.

JANE (after putting the scraps of vase on the mantel): Here? She's coming here?

WILFORT: Yes. She says her husband is going to shoot me. She's coming to prevent it.

JANE: Willy! How could you! And the room not swept or anything. Run right out on the back porch like a dear boy and bring in the vacuum cleaner! (She begins hurriedly picking up the papers from the floor.)

WILFORT: How can you stand there talking like that when Azalea's husband is coming?

JANE: Do you want him to see the house like this?

WILFORT: Oh! (He sinks down into a chair, his head in his hands.)

JANE (dusting): Cheer up! He may not be a good shot. (Wilfort groans.) Just what sonnets were they?

WILFORT: Those Pilkington ones—about "When My Thoughts at Night Are Turning"—you know.

JANE: Oh, those! I thought you'd used them up on the Altmont woman.

WILFORT: Well, with a little rehashing I made 'em do. (Turning suddenly) I don't see how you can stand there dusting when any minute he may be here!

JANE (soothingly): Yes. Yes. Have you a clean shirt?

WILFORT: Yes. I guess so. Why?

JANE (patting his shoulder): Then go put it on. There's a dear boy. And your green tie, Willy; not that awful red thing.

WILFORT: I don't see how you can go on dusting—— (He starts for the door.)

JANE: And in the meantime I'll fix the tea table.

WILFORT: Tea table!

JANE: Yes, dear. When in doubt always serve tea. (She starts for the rear door, wheeling the tea table in front of her.)

WILFORT (in doorway): I don't see how you can go on wheeling that thing when you know that Azalea's husband is coming—— (He goes out, his voice dying to a wail in the distance. JANE stops at the door, leaves the table long enough to straighten a picture, plump a pillow, then, humming a little tune, wheels the table out the rear into the room beyond. After a moment of silence, AZALEA enters through the French windows. She is slender, has bobbed, dark hair, and is overdressed. It is obvious that she is the spoiled result of a too-indulgent husband. She stands looking nervously around, twisting her gloves in her fingers. Then she starts to explore the room. Reaching the portières at the back, she peers into the room beyond. A sound sends her flying over to the couch. JANE enters with a dustpan and brush.)

JANE (stopping at sight of AZALEA): Oh! Beg your pardon. I didn't hear any one ring.

AZALEA (deciding to be brazen): I didn't ring. I wanted to see Mr. Wendall alone.

JANE: I'm afraid you can't see him just now.

AZALEA (starting toward rear door): I will see him. You shan't keep me from him.

JANE: You had much better wait.

AZALEA (at rear door): I must see him now. I will see him!

JANE: Oh, very well. It's the second door to the right at the head of the stairs. But you'd much better wait. (There is a bang in the distance and WILFORT's voice is heard.)

WILFORT: Jane! Jane! Where is that damn' shirt?

AZALEA: Oh! (She retreats to the couch.)

JANE (*crossing to door and calling*): The second drawer in the bureau, Willy. (*She turns to AZALEA.*) You see. You had much better wait, Mrs. Waring.

AZALEA: You know who I am?

JANE: Yes; at least, I think I'm not mistaken; am I? I can't be quite sure because of your hair.

AZALEA: My hair?

JANE: It's dark, you know. I had an idea—something my husband wrote made me think it was yellow.

AZALEA: Something he wrote?

JANE (*picking up paper from desk*): His new sonnet, you know—"To My Lady of Gold."

AZALEA: Oh! (*She turns away.*)

JANE (*chattily*): But then poets are like that, aren't they? Always changing their minds about hair and complexions.

AZALEA (*desperately*): Mrs. Wendall, I didn't come here to-day to talk about complexions.

JANE: Didn't you really?

AZALEA: I—I came to prevent a terrible tragedy.

JANE: Dear me! How nice of you!

AZALEA: My husband—your husband—at least, I mean my husband—

JANE: You seem to have gotten them mixed. Hadn't you better start fresh?

AZALEA: You don't understand. My husband is coming to shoot yours.

JANE (*turning her back to AZALEA*): Would you mind just untying that apron? The knot has slipped.

AZALEA (*untying apron*): I said my husband was coming to shoot yours.

JANE (*taking off apron*): There, thanⁱ, you. That's better. It seems to me Willy did speak about that.

AZALEA: You knew!

JANE: Yes. At least, he seemed to be upset about shooting or something of the kind.

AZALEA: And you let him stay here to meet his death!

JANE: Well, I didn't know your husband was so good at shooting people.

AZALEA (*indignantly*): He isn't. He

never shot any one in his life! How can you sit there like that when you know he's coming——

JANE (*patting her shoulder*): Wait, my dear. Wait a minute. (*She goes out at the rear.* AZALEA stands wringing her hands and looking wildly about the room. JANE returns, trundling the tea table.) There. That's what you need. A cup of tea!

AZALEA (*wildly*): Tea—tea! Ha-ha! (*She is almost hysterical.*)

JANE (*pouring water from a copper kettle over a spirit lamp into two cups and dipping in a tea ball*): There's nothing like a cup of tea to settle the nerves.

AZALEA: And you can sit there drinking tea when my husband is going to shoot your husband!

JANE: How do you know he is? Perhaps it will be the other way around.

AZALEA: How can you?

JANE: Anyway, did you ever hear of any one shooting any one else while drinking tea?

AZALEA (*struck with the idea*): No, at least, I don't think——

JANE (*triumphantly*): Well, then! I tell you, there's nothing like tea.

AZALEA: But you don't realize——

JANE: Sugar?

AZALEA: One lump. The terrible rage—my husband——

JANE: And cream?

AZALEA: No cream—lemon, please. The terrible rage he was in——

JANE: Will you have some cake? It's rather fresh and mussy, but I like this recipe.

AZALEA (*forgetting her troubles for a minute*): It's marshmallow! Do you use the yolks of the eggs?

JANE: No, just the whites, and beat for twenty minutes.

AZALEA: With a wire whip! So do I. It's John's favorite kind.

JANE: John?

AZALEA: My husband, you know——

(There is a crash from without and a violent banging.)

JANE: Ah! I fancy that's your husband now.

AZALEA: Oh! (She begins to wring her hands.) And I haven't talked to Wilfort! He'll be killed! I know he will!

JANE: Here. Just hold this a moment! (She shoves AZALEA beside the tea table on the couch and puts her teacup back into her hands. JOHN WARING opens the door and stalks in. He is a rather rotund business man in the early forties. His face, usually cheerful, is twisted into a scowl. He has managed to work his easy-going temper to a pitch of righteous rage, and he is ripe for anything, even murder.)

JOHN: Azalea! You here!

JANE (calmly): Mrs. Waring is having tea with me.

JOHN: You? Who are you?

JANE: I am Mrs. Wendall.

JOHN: The wife of that—that miserable—little— (He chokes.)

AZALEA: John! Don't!

JOHN: Where is he? I want to see him! I want to kill him!

JANE (soothingly): Yes, yes, but you'll have to wait a minute. He's shaving, and really, you can't go shooting a man who's shaving. It would be too dreadfully messy, with the lather and everything.

JOHN: I won't be put off! I insist upon his coming down. I mean to face him with these and ram them down his throat before he dies. (He drags a sheaf of paper from his pocket and waves it.)

AZALEA: Oh! The sonnets!

JANE: Oh, yes, those sonnets! Are you sure you've really looked them over carefully, Mr. Waring? Have you thought how ridiculous they'd make you appear when they're read at the trial?

JOHN: Trial? What trial?

JANE: When they try you for shoot-

ing Willy, of course. There's always a trial.

JOHN (standing on his rights): You can't frighten me off that way. I would welcome a trial. Every outraged husband in the country would be on my side!

JANE (bending over spirit lamp): Yes, yes, of course. But then, the number of outraged husbands in the country isn't very large, is it? And there are so many other people. The outraged husbands would be quite lost in the scuffle. And then there are the sonnets. They'd be sure to be read in court, and there's something too awfully funny about a husband who goes rampaging around shooting poets and ramming sonnets down their throats. I don't see why sonnets are so funny, but they are. They're good for a laugh any time.

JOHN: Madam, will you be still! Do you mean to stand there and tell me that you think I ought to let this outrageous affront to my honor go unpunished?

JANE: Goodness! Were they as bad as that?

JOHN: Were what as bad?

JANE: The sonnets, I mean.

JOHN: Madam! Can't you understand? It isn't the sonnets—it's the principle of the thing. A miserable blackguard breaks into my home and makes love to my wife. Do you think I should permit it to go on? That I should leave the traitor unpunished, that I should let him go on breaking up other happy homes? I ask you as a woman! (He is paring the air with one hand and waving the sonnets with the other.)

JANE (soothingly): Yes, yes, of course. Here's your tea.

JOHN (stupefied): My what?

JANE: Your tea. (She hands him the cup and he accepts it in sheer astonishment. She approaches him with a little tray containing sugar, cream, and lemon. He realizes he is trapped.)

JOHN: I don't want any—

JANE: No sugar? Do have some sugar.

AZALEA: He always takes sugar in his tea.

JOHN: I tell you I don't want any—

JANE: Only one lump?

AZALEA: No, two.

JANE: And lemon?

JOHN (roaring): I tell you I won't have it!

JANE: No lemon. Cream, then. Say when. (*She pours in cream.*)

JOHN (wildly): I tell you I can't stand here drinking tea when that—

JANE: Then why don't you sit down? (*She pushes him on to the sofa beside his wife.*)

JOHN (more desperately): I will not sit here drinking tea while that miserable—

JANE: And some cake. Do have some cake. Your wife tells me it's your favorite kind.

JOHN (softening for an instant and cramming the sonnets in his pocket): Marshmallow! (*JANE helps him to a generous, sticky slice. He suddenly recovers himself.*) Take it away! I don't want it! (*JANE has already removed the cake plate and he is obliged to hold the sticky wedge in the air.*)

JANE (arranging a fringed napkin over his knees): There, now you're all comfy!

JOHN (his mind is still on his griefs): Madam, I tell you I am not comfy! I will not sit here and drink tea. I demand to see that miserable cur! (*The portières at the rear part and Wilfort comes in. His hair is neatly slicked down. He looks too chastened and good to live.*)

JOHN: Wendal!

WILFORT (attempting to be at his ease): Ah—Waring! Having tea, I see—and Mrs. Waring!

JOHN (waving his cake): Don't you dare address my wife, sir!

JANE: No, Wilfort. Really, you

mustn't. Mr. Waring is annoyed with you.

JOHN: Annoyed! I am furious, sir—furious! I have come to call you to account! I have come to settle the matter with you, sir! To settle it in the only way it can be settled. I say the only way, sir! (*This heroic speech has been somewhat hampered by the fact that one hand holds his cake, the other his tea, while the napkin keeps slipping off his knees. In the end he manages to stick the corner of the napkin in the front of his waistcoat, and it hangs like a bib during the ensuing scene. At the end of his speech he gesticulates with his right hand, endangering his cup.*) By your death!

AZALEA: John, you are spilling your tea!

JANE: Let the poor man spill it if he wants to. You can't blame him for being upset!

JOHN (pawing the air with his left): Upset!

AZALEA: John! Your cake! You're crumbling it on the rug!

JANE (soothingly): It won't hurt it a particle. We have a vacuum cleaner.

JOHN: How can you stand there talking about vacuum cleaners when your husband is philandering with my wife? Haven't you a particle of womanly feeling?

JANES I didn't know you came here to discuss my feelings.

JOHN: I demand an answer to my question.

JANE: Well, if you really want to know, I'd say that if Willy thinks he'd like to go off with your wife, I won't try to stop him.

JOHN: Go off with my wife!

WILFORT: Oh, don't mind my feelings!

AZALEA: How dare you talk like that!

JANE: Really, any one would think you'd all come here to attack me.

JOHN: I came here to choke a low-

down cur with his second-class doggerel.

AZALEA: John!

WILFORT: Doggerel! Don't you dare call it doggerel! Just because you aren't capable of understanding real poetry when you read it with your middle-class, stock-jobbing notions of what's what in art— (*He is preparing to fly at JOHN's throat.*)

JANE: There, there, Willy! Here's your tea! (*He takes the cup absently.*)

JOHN (*emboldened by his adversary's being engaged with the teacup*): I repeat, sir, Doggerel! Dog—gg—g-er—el!

WILFORT: I'll kill you for that! (*He starts forward, spilling his tea.*)

JANE: Willy! You've spilled it on the rug!

WILFORT: I don't care if I have!

JANE (*taking duster from drawer*): There—just wipe it up before it soaks in—that's a dear boy.

WILFORT (*wiping it up in spite of himself*): Damn the rug! You told him it didn't matter.

JANE: But he's company, dear.

WILFORT: Company, when he comes to kill me!

JOHN (*reawakening to his wrongs*): And, by Jove, I mean to do it!

AZALEA: Don't, John! (*She grabs his coat tails.*)

JANE: Your tea is getting quite cold. Let me add a little hot water to it. (*She manages to get between the two men with the kettle of hot water. By spilling a bit on their toes she edges them apart.*)

JOHN: Since you take it so calmly, madam, perhaps you'd like to read what your husband has been sending to my wife! (*He balances his cake on the side of his saucer, reaches in his pocket, and produces the sonnets. After handing them over he stands majestically eating cake while she reads them. He manages to impart an air of triumph to his eating, but gets the marshmallow*

around his mouth. They all watch JANE.)

JANE (*reading*): "When my thoughts at night are turning—" Um—yes— (*She takes another sheet.*) "Meshed within the shadows of your purple hair—" It was red originally, wasn't it, Willy? I mean in the poem, of course. (*Another sheet.*) And "Wings like a sea gull—" I always like that one. (*She runs hastily through the pages and turns to WILFORT.*) Really, Willy, I don't blame Mr. Waring for being angry. The idea of sending those old things to his wife!

AZALEA (*shrilly*): Old things! Why, he wrote them especially for me!

JANE: Well, of course, I don't like to contradict you, but really—

JOHN (*furiously*): You're missing the point. I don't give a damn when they were written. I simply won't have your husband sending passionate verses to my wife!

JANE (*relived*): Oh! If you're only angry because you think they're passionate, you needn't worry a bit. They aren't passionate at all.

JOHN: They are! They're horribly passionate.

JANE: There—you're dreadfully mistaken. I can prove it.

JOHN: I'd like to know how!

JANE (*crossing to desk and opening drawer, produces letter*): There, that's a letter from the editor of *Pilkington's Magazine*. You'll have to admit he's a good judge of poetry. He declined those sonnets three years ago because they were too coldly academic!

AZALEA (*furiously to WILFORT*): Three years ago! And you dared warm over second-hand sonnets and use them on me!

WILFORT (*gloomily*): Well, you did demand so much poetry. I couldn't turn out new stuff all the time. You seemed to think I was a literary sausage machine.

AZALEA: And I suppose you've used them on lots of other women!

JANE (*soothingly*): Not lots, my dear. Just four or five.

AZALEA (*furious*): Oh! (*She turns away*.)

JOHN: Well, I don't know what the other women's husbands did, but I can tell you one thing. You can't treat my wife like that. I'm going to put a stop to this philandering. (*He resolutely puts his cup of tea on the desk*.)

WILFORT (*sitting gloomily down on t'c hassock, his head in his hands*): I wish to God you would!

JOHN: What do you mean, sir?

WILFORT: Do you suppose I enjoy this sort of thing? Having husbands romping in just when I'm getting comfortably to work on a new poem. Do you think I want women calling me up and making me rush over to hold their hands just because I'm naturally sympathetic and their husbands don't understand 'em?

AZALEA: Do you mean to insinuate that I made you come over and hold my hand?

JOHN: You damned cad!

JANE: Really, Willy, that's not polite.

WILFORT (*desperately*): She did call me up, and she did say he didn't understand her. I don't think anybody does. I wish to God I'd never tried.

AZALEA (*in tears*): John! Are you going to stand there and let him insult me? Why don't you shoot him!

WILFORT: That's right! Go ahead and shoot. That's the only way you Philistines know how to handle a poet.

JANE: Willy! I won't have you calling our company names!

WILFORT: Then stop calling me Willy! You know I don't like it! Here a man comes to shoot me, and the best you can do is to go right on, standing there, and calling me Willy!

JANE: Did you ever hear of any one shooting a man named Willy?

WILFORT: No! Of course not!

JANE: Well, then!

JOHN: But that argument's ridiculous!

JANE: So's everything else we've said this afternoon.

JOHN: I'm going to stop talking and act! (*Hé takes a pistol from his pocket*.) I'm going to shoot that precious husband of yours.

WILFORT: Oh! (*He turns toward fireplace*.)

AZALEA: John! (*She screams and covers her eyes*.)

JANE: Wait a minute! Would you mind doing it in the bathroom?

JOHN (*stopping in spite of himself*): Why?

JANE: Willy's so thin. The last husband that tried to shoot him missed him and hit this vase. (*She picks up the remains of vase from the mantel*.)

JOHN (*with a howl of rage, slinging the pistol on the floor*): Oh, damn! I won't be just one of the procession of husbands that misses your husband! I won't give you that satisfaction! (*He throws himself into a chair and mops his brow with his handkerchief*.)

AZALEA: While you've got your handkerchief, wipe your mouth.

JOHN: My mouth?

AZALEA: Marshmallow!

JOHN: Do you mean to say you've let me go around with that— (*His eye falls on the fringed napkin still hanging to his vest*.) And this! Oh, damn!

AZALEA: Oh! You swore at me! You brute!

JOHN: No, no—I didn't. On my honor, I didn't!

AZALEA: You did! You know you did! (*She throws herself kicking on the couch*.)

JOHN: Don't, my love—really—I didn't—

JANE: Just let her alone. She's hysterical.

AZALEA (*sitting up suddenly*): You attend to your own husband and leave mine alone!

JOHN (*throwing himself down again*): Oh! What's the use! We aren't getting anywhere. What are we going to do?

WILFORT (*gloomily*): Yes. What are you going to do?

JANE: It is a little difficult, isn't it? You know, five years ago when problem plays were so popular, Willy and Mrs. Waring could walk right out that door hand in hand, but now, with the housing problem what it is, where would they walk to? They can't live in the park.

JOHN: That isn't the question at all!

JANE (*cheerfully*): But it's a question. You'll have to admit that. Now I suppose I might let them have this house, but then what would become of me? I don't suppose I could find a room to rent in the whole avenue, unless— (*Her eye lights with an inspiration.*) Of course, how stupid of me! If Mrs. Waring comes here, you'll have a spare room. How would it do if I moved in?

WILFORT: Jane! How can you stand there and talk like that!

JOHN: How can you!

AZALEA: Yes, how can you!

JANE: It seems to me that all afternoon some one has been asking me how I can stand there, but nobody seems to offer any way out. Now, I'm willing

to forget my feelings and move over to Mr. Waring's—

WILFORT: I'll be damned if you will! I'll not allow it!

AZALEA (*throwing herself on JOHN's neck*): No! No! No! John! How can you listen to that woman? Why don't you take me home out of this dreadful house with that awful woman standing there?

JOHN: Yes, yes, my dear! (*To JANE*): I'm astonished at you, madam; really, such a proposal—I'm astonished!

AZALEA: John! I want to go home—I want to go home!

JANE: Yes, my love! (*He takes her to the door.*)

JANE (*picking up pistol*): Aren't you forgetting this?

JOHN: I'll leave it. You may want to use it yourself some day.

AZALEA: John! Are you coming?

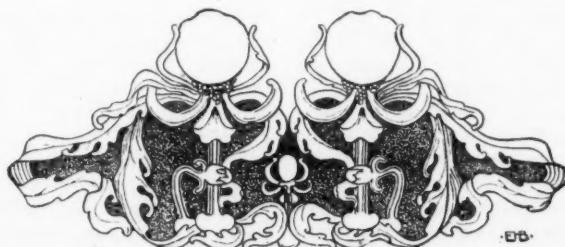
JOHN: Coming, my dear! (*He exits following AZALEA. JANE lays down the pistol and glances at WILFORT. He is studying his poem dreamily.*)

WILFORT (*without glancing up*): Are they gone?

JANE: Yes, dear, quite—quite gone, and the tea's getting cold.

WILFORT (*snapping his fingers*): Cold! That's what I was looking for! Gold—told—cold! (*He sits at desk and begins scribbling. JANE drops down and complacently stirs her tea.*)

JANE (*thoughtfully*): Now, who is "My Lady of Gold?" (*She shakes her head, smiling, and the curtain drops.*)



The Moon—and Other Things

DID you ever long for the moon? If you have not, try it some time. It is a worth-while experience. This is the way it is done. Go out alone some summer night at the ful of the moon. Go, if possible, to the shores of a lake, or, even better, to the sea itself. You will see a long, ineffably silver path, leading straight toward the moon, getting narrower and narrower as it stretches into the distance. Let your eyes follow this pathway until they finally rest on the moon herself—a great mirror, shining with reflected light, but with more mystery, more witchcraft, than any crystal that any fortune teller ever looked at. Relax, and let the moon have its way with you. You will imagine all manner of things, you will wonder if you ever have passed through some previous phase of existence on this earth and where and how it was. Were you Cleopatra or Semiramis? Certainly there is some romance which you have forgotten and which the moon is trying to recall to you.

Since there are only three generations to a century, we don't believe that the miracle happens as often as that. The last great writer of romantic love stories was Ouida. Margaret Pedler is even greater and more compelling in her art. You remember "The Lamp of Destiny." "The Moon Out of Reach" is a story which will interest you even more.



The short fiction in the next issue of SMITH's represents the best work of the best living writers of short stories. "Sanctuary," by Maude Parker, is the intensely interesting sequel to the story of the beautiful Eurasian girl, "Nita, the Proud," which appeared in the September issue. "The Copper Isle," by Jeanne Judson, whose clever work you possibly know, is a thrilling story of the North. It has moments of tragedy, but it is, too, a real love story, which will take you away from the petty things of life. A thoroughly charming love story is "The Magic Carpet," by Mildred Fitz-Hugh. Anne O'Hagan contributes "Holworthy Comes Back," a strong story of an actor. In "The Pattern Unbroken," Mella Russell McCallum touches a dramatic and absorbing situation in the life of a mother. There are good stories, too, by Raymond L. Goldman, Virginia Middleton, and others.

And besides all these, there is the second big installment of James A. Cooper's great novel of Cape Cod, "Sheila of Big Wreck Cove." Read it before it comes out in book form.

"The Moon Out of Reach" is the title of the new serial by Margaret Pedler which starts in the next issue of SMITH's. For most of us, most of the time, the moon is out of reach; but there are high moments in almost all our lives when we seem almost to grasp it. Margaret Pedler has the ability to make these moments live again for us, when we read her absorbing stories. They used to say that a great romantic writer was born about every genera-

Conn of the Coral Seas.

By Beatrice Grimshaw

Author of "Vaiti of the Islands," "Isles of Love," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

Not often does a serial rise to its biggest moments in the final installment, as does this thrilling story of Deirdre Rose and Conn of the Coral Seas.

CHAPTER XIII.

SET her down," said Fursey's voice. "She can walk now."

The carriers stopped with a jerk. They had been laboring hard for the last half hour. In the stillness made by their ready halt, one could hear their panting breath.

"Undo the hammock and take the handkerchief out of her mouth," ordered Fursey. "She can screech all she wants to here."

Somebody fumbled at the lashings of the long bundle. Air and daylight came in. Deirdre's cramped limbs, unable to carry her at first, let her down; she sat on the ground, dazed. A white man's hand slipped the handkerchief gag from her mouth. She looked up and saw Child's immense, awkward form standing above her, and little Fursey grinning beside.

Four pig's feet were lying on the ground. She stared at them, wondering, in spite of the giddiness and sickness caused by the long journey underneath the sun, what they might be for. No one took the trouble to explain. It was not till afterward that she learned she had been bundled up to represent a pig carried native fashion, wrapped in leaves, and slung to a pole, and that the feet gave the last, convincing touch. Nor did she know that Fursey and Child had followed another road, join-

ing her only now, when the sun was going down and the carriers, hard driven by fear of their ruthless little chief, had taken her many miles into the interior of the great, unknown island.

They were under shade now, upon a narrow, winding track which began to loop stiffly uphill. There were banyan trunks by the wayside, waving dank hair of aerial rootlets over the road, if road it could be called, for it was no more than a foot in width.

Pitcher plants, swaying outward, shed foul odors from their fair-appearing cornucopias of shining green. A flower, the color of raw flesh, hung in clusters on a thorny stem; its buds were huge, angular, and heavy, like goblets of butchers' meat. The knees and ankles of the banyan trunks, where they had been cut lately to clear the path, showed red and bleeding. There are spots in the fierce Western Pacific—known only to those who know the islands—where Nature, taken by some mood of demoniac sport, seems to have mimicked in herself the devilish human creatures who live on her sufferance. This was such a place, had Deirdre been in a mood to see it.

But she was in no mood to see or think of anything save her present plight, which she judged to be worse than that of yesterday. Yesterday she

The story began in the June number.

had been within a mile or two of her friends, though without power of communication. It had been, at least, possible that they might take the chance of her being still alive, might search the island, and find her there. Steve—surely Steve would not accept her death without a struggle. He had warned her—oh, how justly!—never to leave the Residency Island unguarded. It mattered little or nothing, at this crisis, that they had quarreled and parted; that they were not likely ever to be married. Deirdre knew well that the very heat and fury of his anger showed the strength of his love for her. Steve would not tamely believe that she was dead even though there seemed to be no reason for believing otherwise. She could imagine him going over to Wawaka at the full speed of his best oarsmen, challenging Fursey, hunting the island from landing place to summit, from coral shore to shore.

Ah, but so, no doubt, could Fursey imagine this! That was the reason he had taken her off into the bush. That was the reason he had had her carried on a pole like a pig, covered with leaves, so that there should be no tale to tell of a white woman borne away into the forests. That was his reason for keeping hid, though doubtless near by, until they had reached this lonely spot at the end of the foothills and the beginning of the inland ranges.

Here was the boundary between the tribes of the coast and the tribes of the hills, always at war, after a secret, sniping fashion. The plan had been well laid. Sitting there on the ground, she saw the mortal danger in which, now, she was entangled. The sickness of fear crept over her; the lonely track, leading to unknown forest depths and to half-known horrors whispered among the whites, seemed like the very track of hell.

"Hop it," said Fursey's voice, muffled by a huge cigar. "The boys have

had enough; you'll have to walk the hill." He laid his hand on her arm, as if to pull her up. Deirdre shook her benumbed limbs into action, and hurriedly rose. She stood, swaying a little, and staring about. The sun was getting low; it came through the leaves in little spurts of angry fire. The heat was frightful; Deirdre, the carriers, Child, and Fursey dripped from bare arms and foreheads; hair was like seaweed new drawn from the sea. They started. Child stalked ahead, and looked at no one. Now and then he spat blood-colored saliva on the path, and Deirdre knew, with a sinking heart, that he had drugged himself with betel nut. She followed next. Behind her walked Kalaka, who had mysteriously appeared from nowhere. Fursey and the carriers came after.

"Where are we going? What are they going to do?" was the thought which hammered in her brain, mingled with a wild, unceasing call for Conn. Could he not hear? Was he, who loved her so, unconscious of her need, while she called and called? She tried hard to send her message.

"Steve," she repeated in her mind, as they toiled up the rough, ascending track. "Steve! Save me! Come!"

It was a cruel journey. Deirdre was young and strong, but she was tired. She had not eaten that day, save for a crust that Kalaka, at Fursey's bidding, had tossed her. The jerking and jolting of the rude litter had left her stiff in almost every muscle. The track wound up and up, with never a pause for breath. When she would have stopped, Fursey snarled at her.

"We'll never get there before night, if you don't hurry up," he told her, with a blast of his characteristic swearing. "And if we don't, the coast tribes will get us and eat us. Get on!"

Child seemed half stupefied with betel nut. His eyes were wide and glaring, his mouth was all over crimson stain,

but he reached a huge hand to Deirdre by and by, and whirled her along the path at his side. And so they went for another two hours, until the sun failed altogether, and dusk began to rise like a green, drowning tide. They could still see the road, thin as a furrow, cutting the dense bush, and the strip of shadowy sky above. All else was forest, night, and fear.

Suddenly Kalaka, who had been padding silently for hours, called out to Child in native phrases. Child nodded, and turned to the right, off the track, into the bush. Directed by the girl, he wound about between the stems of nutmeg and wild fig, until, more by feeling than sight, he struck another path.

"Dass right now," said Kalaka. "Nother road, he make for to gammon some one. Suppose no savvy, walk along him, you fall down one big, bee-eg hole full up along spear. Spear he go along inside you belly, den you die."

"Fine defenses they have," said Fursey cheerfully.

Kalaka halted the party a little farther on, and called out at the top of her shrill voice what seemed to be a password. It was answered from not very far away.

"Go on," said the girl. "Diss place, s'pose you no 'top, sing out, by 'n' by man belong village s'oot him gun along load"—road—"him kill you dead." She seemed to swell with pride as she spoke. Deirdre guessed that this village to which they were coming must be the one from which the girl had been bought, to be a slave to Fursey on Wawaka Island. Kalaka was evidently enjoying her office of guide.

Singing as she went, she led them through the thickening dusk to a point where something like a wall rose up and barred the path. Two shadowy shapes, armed with guns, spears, and clinking cartridge belts, jumped out from nowhere, and laid their musket

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barrels across the way. Kalaka spoke to them; so, to their astonishment, did Child, who seemed to know the language as well as the girl herself.

The men, who had been hovering doubtfully from foot to foot, uncertain whether to let the strangers pass, let out a united shout. One of them seized the white man by his arm, and made, in the dusk, a curious motion, which Deirdre could just see, pulling his own hand with a jerk across his mouth. Child did the same. With a yell of delighted laughter, the native let him go, and led the way into the fortified town.

There was a wolf mouth of a gate, just wide enough for one slim person to squeeze through. It was further protected by its extreme lowness, which obliged any one entering the village to bend down almost double. In turn, Child, Kalaka, Deirdre, and Fursey entered. The natives who had carried her—two only—stood trembling at the gate, not daring to go through. Roughly the guardians spoke to Fursey and Kalaka, pointing to the native strangers and shaking their woolly heads. Fursey said something in a low tone to the nearest native. Kalaka, clapping her hands together, with an ugly laugh, ran into the village square, which was brightly lighted by torches and cooking fires.

"You come," she said to her charge, dragging the white woman by the hand. "You get out of the damn' road, will you?"

"What is the matter?" asked Deirdre.

"Woman, get out of de way," was all Kalaka would say. A remembrance of something heard or read about the customs of these fierce and cruel people returned to the girl. She could not be sure, but she thought that the sudden retirement of women meant fighting, murder. What were they going to do?

Kalaka, hiding behind a house, and

still holding fast to Deirdre's hand, seemed to listen. There was no cry, no struggle. There was, after one interminable minute, a cracking blow. Another. Then nothing more.

"He perish," said Kalaka delightedly. She let go Deirdre's hand, and began to dance, throwing her arms above her head, and singing a wild, but musical song. There were other women in the inclosed square of the fortified village. Like Kalaka, they danced and sang, flinging up their arms and tossing back their heads. Deirdre did not dare to ask what it was that had just happened. She hardly dared to let herself think. The carriers, who alone could tell where she had been taken, who would have talked, as natives always did, to their friends— She knew that if she thought about it, she must lose her reason. And never, in all her eight and twenty years, had reason been more sorely needed.

"I won't think," she told herself, biting her trembling lips. "What's this village? A mountain village in the unexplored part of the island, I suppose. What an immense, dusty square, and all the little, dirty palm houses built round it. Those are drums, those enormous things in the middle, hollow trees, with horrible faces carved. My God, I'm tired—tired! There is Fursey coming back."

He came, strutting in his high-heeled shoes and twisting the incredibly long ends of his ginger mustache. The fire-light and torchlight shone upon him, and showed clearly every line in his wide, villainous, but clever little face. He was giggling. Something, Deirdre feared to think what, had given him satisfaction.

"Come along, you, Child," he called. Child, slower, soberer, came shambling after him. Half a dozen native bucks, with woolly hair lined into black and white stripes, black paint round their

fierce eyes, red and white paint in patterns upon their naked, glistening bodies, followed Child. They stared at Deirdre with a kind of horror. She was as strange, unnatural to them as a ghost might have been to herself. No white woman had ever been seen or dreamed of, so far inland, on unknown Meliasia.

"Well, hn-hn!" laughed Fursey. "Child and I have got to be going. We mean to be back on Wawaka before morning, in case any one gets talking and comes over to pay a call. This is Kalaka's town. She'll stay here till I give her leave to go again. She's been well paid for; they won't let her away, or you. I'm going to show up at home; I'll be back in a few days' time, and by then you'll have made up your mind to take me to that mine of Conn's. Look here, my lady"—he thrust his face close to hers; Kalaka grinned to see her wince back—"I don't know how much I believe or don't believe of that little yarn of yours. But you can believe this—if you don't tell, you'll be made to tell, and my ways of making people do things aren't nice. If you do tell, you can take me to see the place first, after the talk has died out and they are convinced that you are drowned. Then you can either go back to your friends"—she saw his eyes blink as he said it, and knew that he was lying—"or you can stay on Wawaka with me and be the queen of the island.

"You can have four days to make up your mind. And you can be easy that nobody'll find you here. No one knows this place exists, except Kalaka and us. The hill tribes eat the coast tribes on sight, so there's no gossiping, and the whites have never been here. I don't want to be unkind to you," he continued, after a pause. "I'm not a devil, you know. I'm just a man who does what he feels like doing, and doesn't let anybody or anything come between. You treat me well and I'll treat you



She lifted her voice and sang the gypsy song. At the end of it, she broke into improvised words, sung to the same tune.

well. That's me, Fursey, and everybody knows it:

"Kalaka, you look out good along this fellow mary. Suppose you let him go, you go where Maiva went. Three-four day I come back."

The chief of the village, a man with a face like an iron devil; and legs and arms like the trunks of trees, had just come up, and was looking at the party with the calm incuriousness of true high breeding.

"Talk to this haw-haw Johnnie, will you?" Fursey demanded of Child. "Tell him it's a hundredweight of tobacco and twenty tomahawks to keep her safe. Look slippy; we ought to be getting back."

Child spat the quid of betel nut out of his mouth, staining the ground at his feet crimson. His pupils were enormously dilated, the surface of the eyes like glass. He spoke monotonously, as if he scarcely knew what he

was saying. The chief, who seemed to regard him as different, in some occult way, from the other whites, drew close to him and listened. At the end he nodded his head with a dislocating jerk, snatched a yam from one of his henchmen, handed it to Child, and walked off.

"That's the guest gift," said Child, still staring. "He's agreed."

"Hop it, man, hop it. We've not any too much time," cried Fursey impatiently. "We don't want an exploring expedition to Wawaka with me away."

"I don't like it," said Child, without stirring.

"Damn it, what don't you like? When did you get the right to talk about what you like and what you don't, anyway? Don't you know these people will look after the little tart all right till things blow over? Don't you know they wouldn't touch her with a ten-foot pole?"

"I know it a dashed sight better than you do."

"Well, then, what's the trouble? I've stood about all from you I'm going to stand." The tone was threatening, and Child, through all the stupor of his betel-nut drunk, seemed to feel it. He winced visibly. Deirdre watched him in terror. Was her one friend going to desert her?

"I don't understand—things," said Child stupidly. "I forget—and everything muddles itself. But I—I—want to stay here."

"Stay here? What for?"

"I—you couldn't get to Wawaka tonight, if I've to come, too."

"We'll see about that. You can hurry, if you like, or if I like."

"You'd better let me stay. You know I can't do anything against you. But—suppose the place got raided?"

"It's not going to be."

"It might," said Child, who was making a fierce effort to regain his clearness of mind, and evidently succeeding. "It would be no good to any of

us, if she got knocked on the head. You—you'd better let me stay, Fursey."

"Not to let her escape," said Fursey, watching him narrowly. "You know what would come of that."

"I know. I want to stop in case of trouble. These chaps are all right, I suppose, but one would like to make sure they're at peace with their neighbors."

"Well, you can stay till to-morrow, but no longer. I want you to show up at Wawaka. You can talk to them here, and make them understand. I know you can," He laughed with what seemed to be a secret meaning, and Deirdre again saw the other man flinch ever so little under the lash of Fursey's words.

"So long," said the small rascal, hurrying out of the gateway. He had no light with him; he had passed the intricate defenses of the town only once in the dark. Nevertheless, he seemed assured of finding his way. The tall chief followed his departure with moving eyes in an immobile iron face.

"Mgh!" he grunted approvingly. Then he walked over to where Deirdre was standing, uncertain where to go or what to do. In the wavering light he looked at her, taking her in from head to foot: her long, half-knotted hair, her white face and amber eyes, the soiled print dress that hid her slim body, save the hands and feet. These, too, he looked at attentively, an expression of profound disgust struggling with his chieftlike immobility of countenance.

"Wrrgh!" was his one remark. He spat violently on the ground.

"He no like," gurgled Kalaka delightedly. "Him t'ink you one oogly woman." She burst into a pleased titter. It was wine to her woman's vanity.

Deirdre was conscious of a deep thankfulness. This was not at all like the tales in books, where the savage chieftain always complicated things by

falling in love with the beautiful white woman. One difficulty, one danger, was to be feared. She had heard that dark men do not naturally admire white women; that it takes the coming of civilization to create difficulties of this kind between race and race. But she had not quite believed it. Her vanity of sex forbade. Now she saw that it was true. She saw herself an object of scorn and dislike to men for the first time in her life, and she could have sung hymns of joy.

Child, once Fursey was gone, had relapsed into his betel-nut dream. He was seated on the ground, chewing and spitting red streams. She felt an infinite disgust for the white man, the man of her own class, sunk so low. She was beginning to fear that he had sunk even beyond what she had guessed. Yet it was well to have him there. Anything of one's own color!

Reaction—the force that snatches us back from disintegration and death a million times in a life, failing us but once, and that once the last time of all—was beginning to lift her spirits again. She would get out of this somehow. Who would have thought she could have come, safe and unharmed, through the terrors of these last twenty-four hours? Yet here she was, tired and dirty and hungry, but in no way the worse. She would win through! She would!

Food was brought out by and by. Deirdre eyed it with uneasy apprehension at first. She knew she must be among the cannibal towns, and there was no knowing what might not be served up at the communal meal now beginning to be spread on the ground. But she saw nothing worse than pig, wrapped in green leaves, baked bananas, yams, arrowroot boiled and tied up in tiny puddings. The men squatted down first, and ate, not greedily, but slowly, and with what might have been called very fair table manners. When they

had finished, the women, squatting patiently outside the ranks of diners, followed them, and squabbled over the remains.

Child, suddenly waking up, called in a voice of thunder to Kalaka. What he said Deirdre did not know, but it took effect. The savage girl brought food to both; hot yams and sweet potatoes, served on pleated mats protected by green leaves. She recompensed herself for the service by making a face at Child and treading, as she left, on Deirdre's foot.

There was water in a tall bamboo, leaning against one of the houses. Child tipped it, and handed it to the girl. He drank after her. Then he said, wiping his mouth on what remained of a torn sleeve:

"I was a gentleman—once."

"What happened?" asked Deirdre. They were sitting side by side upon a log used by the women for beating out tapa cloth.

A dance was forming among the natives. Oiled till each muscle stood out in high lights, painted black, white, and red, decorated with red flowers set in their hair, and with green and white grasses tucked into the arm and leg bands that were their only clothing, the men of the nameless village were beginning their nightly amusement. More and more food was being carried in through the narrow, trap gateway, and piled in heaps before the drum trees. Women had drawn themselves up into a long row and, holding wands in their hands, shuffled and hummed incessantly. By and by some one began to beat the drum trees and, in an instant, the whole town rang with a horrible, dull, fierce clamor, the very essence of savagery. The trees were ten to fifteen feet in height, hollowed inside, and carved at the top into frightful grinning faces, with long tongues that waggled and waved under the thundering of the beater's stick.

Child's answer could scarcely be heard above the uproar.

"Many things," Deirdre thought she heard. "The last—ended. Betel nut—betel nut—it's death, moral death to a white man. You'll do anything."

Somehow, she was not afraid of him. Her woman's instinct told her that the soul of the man still lived. Did Fursey's live? Had he ever had a soul?

"You can get back," she persisted. "There's always a way."

"Is there?" said Chi'd, turning his blue eyes, glassy with the drug, upon her. "What way?"

Deirdre considered. Things in books rushed back to her, half recollected, vague.

"If you could do some good thing, some great *wood* thing," she found at last. "It would be a kind of stairway. I don't speak well—that noise makes my mind go round and round."

It was increasing every minute; more natives had taken a hand, and the whole grove of drums was in action, booming like an angry sea.

"It's meant to be hypnotizing, that, and the women's waving and shuffling about," she thought. "They've always known about those things."

Child was not looking at the drummers; the whole wild scene had too long been known to him.

"You think I could wipe things out?" he said at last.

"Oh, don't take me literally! What does one know? I'm only quoting what somebody has said somewhere."

The big man was silent for a while.

"Too late," he said by and by. "You don't know everything. God forbid—" He stopped.

The dance was working up. Round and round the central group of drum trees fled the men dancers, heads down and arms out, sailing over the ground like birds of prey. Deirdre, half drugged by the thunderous sound of the drumming and the endless, monotonous

shuffle of the women's dance, watched as one watches in a heavy, stifling dream. She saw, in this dream, the iron-faced chief, old man though he was, leading the dance with the lightness of a youth, performing wonders of muscular activity, without the slightest change of his set, inhuman countenance. She saw the others, following him and imitating, as she now understood, the hover and pounce of a bird of prey, chasing its victim. She traced, scarce knowing that she did so, the resemblance running through all the dance to the sinister, black things, half bat, half bird, that made the hideous avenue of idols down on the far-away coast. The dance grew hotter; they had taken up their guns and were dancing madly and more madly round the drum trees, the cocked and loaded weapons on their shoulders. All the noise that had gone before was as nothing to the thunder-drumming that now began, shot through with the women's long, howling screams.

Deirdre heard Chi'd say something to himself, a short, sharp word. He was on his feet. He had taken her hand.

"Come out of this," he said, leading her to the nearest building, a low-roofed, long, thatch house, surrounded by a fence of bamboo. "There's no one here. Come inside." They were almost running. Child pulling her along. He kept her with her back to the dance. A lame old man near the door crept forward, and made threatening sounds. He did not want them to go in; he shook his feeble arm. Child looked full at him, and said something Deirdre could not translate. The old man laughed, surprised. He turned away.

"Come in," said Child hoarsely, through the furious thunder of the drums. "You can't see—I mean, it's quiet in here." He pulled her through the doorway, a canoe doorway of ancient pattern, narrow and very high.

Inside, there was solitude and, when the door was shut, a certain measure of peace.

Child struck a match, and, feeling for a candlenut torch—he seemed to know just where everything was to be found—lighted it. Beneath the smoky flare, Deirdre looked, with relief, at an almost empty hut.

There they stayed for an hour or two. From the chanting and dancing of the natives outside there was a reprieve. Kalaka came once or twice and looked in, saying something to Child. He answered her dully and briefly, and she went away again.

Deirdre, seated for very weariness on the ground, beaten into a passive, hypnotic state by the endless thumping of the drums and almost half asleep, was waked, at last, to full attention by an unexpected happening outside. The cannibals had ended their chants and were beginning to sing. At the same time the drummers abruptly ceased their beating, and there was peace.

So great was the relief, at first, that she hardly noticed what the singing was like; it was enough that that frenzied pounding had stopped at last. But in a minute the melody began to catch her ears, the keen ears of a composer.

"Why, it's good! Listen!" she exclaimed. Child, with an air of untellable weariness, was leaning his huge, slack body against the walls of the hut, staring emptily at the roof.

"I don't know anything about those things," he said. "I never knew one tune from another, even when I was—" He stopped.

Deirdre, roused to interest, took no notice of him.

"Listen," she said again. "Why, it's hardly savage music at all! Hear that modulation. These people can sing!"

"Cannibals," observed Child, in answer to the tone of amazement in her voice, "are generally more intelligent than the other natives. Victors—sur-

vival of what is it? I used to know all about that, when—" The sentence trailed off again.

During nearly an hour the wild concert continued, one man singing a solo now and then, to be taken up at intervals by a full-throated chorus. The tunes were monotonous, brief in range, and there seemed to be few of them, for after the first half hour the singers did nothing but repeat. Still, the character of the music was very far from poor, and it went with a splendid swing. The conclusion was that these cannibal brutes could, and would, handle better music, if they had the opportunity.

"They told me something about this at the mission," breathed Deirdre. "The converts used to sing wonderfully; just give them an air, and they absorbed it. But I did not know these people—"

"Same people," said Child sleepily. "I heard the chief—fellow with the tin face on him—once brained a chap from another village for stealing one of their songs."

The singing had stopped. The village seemed settling down to rest. Kalaka, looking, as usual, handsome, fierce, and sulky, came to the door, dressed in a fringe of grass, and beckoned to Deirdre to come out.

"Woman no stop along diss house," she said. "You come woman house wit' me. You sleep along me, no lun away."

The women's house, where the unmarried girls slept under guard—a sentry with a gun watching the door, lest neighboring tribes should break in and steal—was not far from the hut in which Deirdre and Child had retreated. Child gave Deirdre to understand that he would sleep at the door of this hut. "If you want me, you can call me," he said.

She thanked him, and went.

All that night—it was not a long one, for the dancing and the concert had run on till nearly dawn—Dierdre lay,

unwillingly, close to the fierce Kalaka, held even in sleep by the native girl's strong arm. She herself slept little. This was a worse night than the last. What might the next one bring? Oh, the little, white, safe room in the Residency, with the night light and the frog, and Mrs. Carbery's snoring on one side and Blackbury's heavy weight creaking his chain stretcher at the other! Oh, what one would give to be there, to wake from this horrible dream!

But the only dream she woke from was the troubled, tossed vision that assailed her, close to dawn, in which she found herself slipping, slipping, down a long, black slope which ended in a blank nothingness, while Fursey and the chief with the iron-devil face stood capering at the top.

With morning, hope revived. Conn would discover her. Blackbury would bring a body of police up, and raid the town. The man-of-war would come in, and the captain would find out what had happened, and rescue her, and take every one, more or less, off to trial and jail in Fiji. She managed to feel quite cheerful for a little while.

Then the sight of Child sitting like a native on the ground at the door of the hut, chewing his eternal betel nut, struck her with a sense of chilling weakness and dismay. That, all she had to depend on! That thing, which had once been white, a gentleman, a man, and was now—she feared to think what.

There was no use hoping that Conn or Blackbury would guess. How could they? If she had found Conn's clothes lying beside the swimming bath, and Conn nowhere to be seen, would she not have concluded that he had been drowned in those tempting, dangerous waters beyond the guardian fence? If she had not been certain, if she had perhaps induced Blackbury to question natives, hunt all over Wawaka, what would the result have been? Nothing

at all. No one would have seen any white person being taken to Wawaka Island. No one would have found anything amiss on the island itself. Friends on Meliasi would have waited, wondered a little, grieved a great deal, and then given the missing one up for lost. Would not they? *Had not they?* She was sure they had.

And yet—yet—if it were she who sought, if the missing one were Conn, she would never have quite believed him dead until she had seen his body lying at her feet.

Some of the men were going out of the village. She watched them with a certain dull interest. Already the heaviness of the captive mind began to be hers. Trifles obsessed her. She stared and gaped, conscious al' the while of deep underlying terror that she dared not think about. The men were loaded with goods: fruit from their gardens, sweet potatoes, yams. Women, not men, carried the loads as a rule. She wondered.

Kalaka, squatting near and smoking a bamboo pipe, took it out of her mouth long enough to remark in a superior manner:

"Him go makiti."

"Makiti?"

"Makiti—one man, him sellem someting, 'nother man, him buy. Salt-water man havem salt, shell. Man-bush havem yam, fotato."

"Market! Where?" It seemed odd to her that the coast and the hill tribes, so patently afraid of one another, should venture to meet on a mere commercial pretext.

Kalaka, who seemed in a better temper to-day, condescended to explain. The hil' men and the salt-water men, it seemed, never met un'less to kill. But each had goods that the other required. Therefore, they arranged to travel to a point midway, where the hill tribes, arriving first, laid down their goods on a stone, and then, retiring into the for-

est, called out in loud song to let the salt-water men know they were honestly going back. Still singing, they retired till they could be no longer heard. At this point of the negotiations the coastal men came up, singing also, examined the goods, left an equivalent, and retired, still singing. The hill men came down, left signs to show approval or disapproval, and went back, repeating the previous performance of song. This might go on all day, if the parties were not satisfied and the bargaining was keen; it might go on into the next day, or it might end at the first stage, after only one or two bouts of "setting to partners." All the time neither party of traders was ever within a mile of the other. If either party stopped singing, it was the signal for a charge and a fight to anticipate the treachery suggested by silence.

Deirdre listened with dull interest, until suddenly a stray word from Kalaka stung her into life.

"Very good my countryman he sing, more better dan salt-water man. Very good sing him havem. One time, salt-water man him stealem my countryman sing, my countryman cut hir liver out. One time, him too good sing my countryman, den dat chief, Conn, him take him sing, dat Chief Conn him singem all-a-same, along fano."

Deirdre judged this to mean that Conn, enamored of some of the mountain people's airs, had taken down one or two, and sung them at his own piano.

Kalaka went on to say that her countrymen, being in awe of the chief Conn, had omitted to cut out his liver according to etiquette, but that they had asked him to send payment of "tobacco," and that he had done. He came to the monthly market himself as often as not, away down near the shore, and he often amused himself singing their songs.

Did he wait for the mountain party to come down, after the shore party had retired? Deirdre asked, with throb-

bing heart. She knew the native's incurable propensity for gossip. She thought it impossible that Conn shou'd not hear something from them.

Kalaka dashed her hopes instantly. No, the mountain men did not wait. They were too much afraid of Conn. He was a friend of the king, Blackbury, and he might tell the king things they had done that would make him angry. The king was always getting angry about nothing at all. Once he had told the man-of-war about the white trader the mountain men had taken away and eaten, and the man-of-war had shot big guns into the bush, and destroyed their villages.

Fursey would have known, reflected Deirdre dully; of course he must have known, that there was no danger in this monthly market business, conducted at gunshot length, or he would never have brought her up here to hide her away. There was no hope there.

Suddenly she sat straight up on the ground, charged with a new idea. What if she got these men to carry her message for her? She put her hand to her head and tossed back the heavy hair. She wanted to think.

Only a few of the men had gone. The rest were sitting and loafing about the village. By Kalaka's account, they would not leave till afternoon. It was considered best for the marketers to go in two different parties as an added precaution against treachery. Deirdre looked at them, and her plan sprang full-grown in her brain.

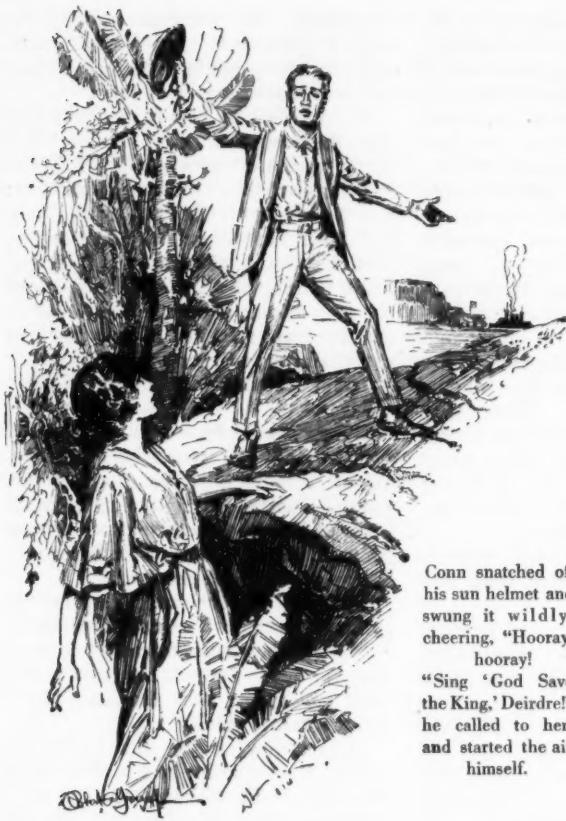
"This man he no sing good," she said scornfully to Kalaka.

The girl blazed at once.

"Him sing damn good. Him sing all-a-same pigeon long bush." Pigeon was the native word for any winged fowl.

"Him no savvy my sing," went on Deirdre, watching closely.

"Mgh!" grunted Kalaka, uneasy and contemptuous.



Deirdre smiled a small, fine smile. She knew that her songs, for all that they were in no sense "classical," made a sincere appeal to the popular mind. She had just had evidence of the musical tastes and tendencies owned by these extraordinary cannibals.

"I believe they would," she breathed. "I believe I'll try."

She put back her head, opened her lips, and sent out the gay, clear notes of the song that, beyond all others, had made her popular and famous—"Gypsy Lover." She sang it through from beginning to end. It was short, like most

of her songs, but it carried much in a small compass, and the melody was irresistible. When she came to the last verse, she sang it twice over:

"Far away, far away,
where the hills are
calling,
To the open roadway, to
the roof of heaven's
blue,
To the last long camp of
all, when life's last
dusk is falling,
Gypsy lover, gypsy love,
I'll go with you!"

Into her mind as she sang came, stabbingly, the memory of the day when she last had sung that song. Could it be such a little while ago? The sun among the mango trees, sinking low; white pathways, red flowers lying in drifted heaps; herself among the flowers, singing to her lover.

Here, full sun was blazing on the dusty square of the village; dark, sinister creatures were squatting in ugly nakedness; there was a feeling, almost a smell, of blood in the air; danger, sickening, overpowering, hovered like a cloud or like one of the nightmare birds in the idol lane of Melias.

And she was singing to these cannibal creatures of happy love among the blue hills and long, cool roads of England; she, loveless and like to die, here in the terrible New Cumberlands, whither she never, never should have come.

She was startled from her mood of

bitter memory by a strange, an incredible sound. Two or three of the young men were picking up her air, with every symptom of delight, repeating phrase after phrase, singing it to nothing at all, to native words improvised on the spur of the moment, to the rhythmic beats of a little, musical-sounding hand drum, which some one had fetched from a house.

They had caught her song! There it went: "Far away, far away— Roof of heaven's blue." Heaven alone knew what words they might be putting to it. But they were singing it, and with gusto. They jumped up and sang it standing, dancing. They beat the measure with their hands. They had got it right. They were singing it better and better every minute. The whole village joined in, and as it had rung on the night before, to the sound of the native melodies, so it rang this morning to the notes of Deirdre's merry gypsy tune.

"Him takit makiti!" cried Kalaka, foreseeing credit and triumph for her town. "Him takit makiti! Him sing it for de damn salt-water man."

For the rest of that day Deirdre had reason, if ever she had had in her life, to tire, to become sick, of her own music.

She was glad when the sun was high, and the first party long away, it was thought good for the second party to leave. After they had gone the village settled down to quiet. Child was asleep; he had not yet started, as Fursey had ordered him to do. In fact, he did not seem to have any intention of leaving the place. Most of the women had gone to work in the gardens; nearly all the men were away to market. Some few old men, and the guard that never left the gateway, were left. Kalaka, too, remained, and kept a watchful eye on Deirdre. But the captive girl had no intention of attempting to escape. She had seen from the first that in this

stockaded village, with its one guarded gate, escape could not be thought of.

What then? If Conn, by some miraculous chance, found out where she was before it was too late, and brought a body of armed white men to rescue her, could she be rescued? She doubted even that. In a village where every man had a gun, and used it without hesitation, where the place must be taken by storm, if at all, and not in any case without fierce fighting, her chance of surviving a furious fire between attackers and defenders would be very small. Fursey, of course, had known all that, had calculated on it, with his own devilish cunning. Child was her friend in so far as he could be any use, but she feared that that was not far.

Seated on the ground, in the shade of one of the squat thatched houses, she mused, and her thoughts were not happy ones. She looked up, at last, to see the immense figure of Child shambling toward her across the open square. He seemed to have given up his drug for the present. His mouth was no longer stained dark red, his eyes had lost their glassy look. The effects of the betel nut, however—so much worse with a white man than with a black—still showed in the intense weariness of his white face, the dullness of his expression. He looked like one who had been dead, and who was scarce yet recalled to life.

"I wanted to say to you," he spoke heavily, "that you needn't be too much afraid. There may be a way."

"What way?" asked the girl, looking up at him. She did not put overmuch faith in any promise of Child's.

"I can't tell you that. But if any one finds out you're here—"

"Why can't you go and tell them?" interrupted Deirdre, somewhat sharply. She found it hard to have patience with this wreck.

"I could do that," answered the big man, "but if I did, it would come to

the same in the end, and you wouldn't be helped."

"I don't understand you a single bit."

"Don't you see, if you're in the middle of a fight between the cannibals and the whites, you are pretty dead sure to have your head blown off?"

"Yes, I see, but what do you mean by its coming to the same in the end?"

"I mean this: there is something I might do to set you free of the village. But it can only be done if I'm here and stay here. To get you out is the thing."

"Well, if there is something you can do, why haven't you done it?" asked Deirdre, trying hard to have patience.

Child looked at her strangely.

"I'll do it, don't you fear," he said. "Do you know the poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon?

"What one in particular?" asked Deirdre, wondering if the drug had driven him mad. She did know Gordon, of course; all sea gypsies do.

"The one about the girl who died."

"I said in my heart, when his shadow crossed—"

"Oh, yes, I remember part of it! It goes on, doesn't it:

"What does it matter for one soul lost,
Millions of souls have been lost before.

Is that it?"

"Yes," said Child, turning away from her. "That's it."

She did not see his face, as he went back, without another word, to his shelter in the doorway of the hut. The day declined; blue shadows crept across the burning dust of the square; the women came back from their gardens; smoke of cooking fires began to rise. Still Child sat there, unmoving, looking down.

CHAPTER XIV.

A strong southeast breeze was booming about the Residency verandas. The commissioner, the French commissioner, Conn, and Mrs. Carbery had found a sheltered spot on the veranda

that looked northward, and, under the light of Blackbury's great swinging lamp, were talking slowly, with long gaps between their sentences.

They were all depressed and tired. It was three days now since Deirdre's disappearance. Only the faintest hope had existed that she might not have been drowned. Blackbury had little hope, Conn not much hope, and Mrs. Carbery, supported by the persistent coming up of "coffin cards," had no hope; she had been sure, from the first, that the "lady gurl" was at the bottom of the harbor.

"She would be always blandandherin' me to leave her go outside," explained Deirdre's chaperon, "and for all I would be tellin' her that sharks and all manner was in it, she woud be girnin' to go. Sure, when she went down her lone, it would be to go over the fence, and over it she will have wint, God rest her soul."

Blackbury, dealing cards with a slower hand than usual to Des Roseaux—the two had taken up their ancient game of écarté of late; it seemed that no one had heart for the new game of bridge—was of opinion, when asked, that Deirdre had taken cramp. The sudden change from the hot swimming bath to the cold waters outside might have brought it on. A shark would have been seen by some one; he understood that there had been a canoe with a native in it not very far outside.

He had had the question of the canoe looked up conscientiously, but without expecting to hear anything of moment. The native who had been in it was not forthcoming, and no one could or would tell anything about him. This, Blackbury thought, was natural enough. The New Cumberlanders were shy of the Residency, and no doubt the paddler of the canoe had heard of the white girl's death, and feared he might be blamed for it.

Des Roseaux alone had doubts. Des

Roseaux would not let the matter alone. When Conn, half mad with remorse and grief, swore at him roundly, and told him to hold his silly cackle, the Frenchman still persisted. How did they know she was not still alive? How did they know Fursey was not at the bottom of this?

"Damn it, man, didn't we comb the who'e of Wawaka, from the house to the beach and back again?" demanded Conn, looking up, fierce-eyed, from the heavy fit of musing into which he had fallen. "Didn't we see Fursey and his crew? Was there a sign of her there?"

"Me, I find that this Fursey has been too explanatory," persisted Des Roseaux. "He has explained so many things that we don't ask. We not desire to know what he's been doing all the week and yesterday. We not desire to know he has been lying sick in the house the morning she has disappeared."

"If I had my way he would be a jolly sight sicker," commented Conn. "You wouldn't let me have it out of him."

"My dear chap," remonstrated Blackbury, looking up from his cards, "you must try to remember some of us are here to make an attempt toward creating order. I've had to pull you up once for behaving like a red Indian."

Conn did not seem to hear him.

"If I had a grain of hope that he knew anything, I wouldn't let him rest," he went on; "but I can't see just where his interest would have been in playing any of his tricks. I certainly did think he might follow her and annoy her, if he found her away from the island without escort, so I advised her not to go cruising about alone anywhere. But carrying her off, after what I gave him for his conduct at my house, it isn't likely."

"Fursey has carried off one lady, isn't it?" asked the French commissioner,

regarding his hand of cards with a somewhat absent air.

"Yes, more or less. Of course, she went sailing in his boat, and allowed him to play the fool. This is another matter. Bad as he is, I don't judge he would dare to do it, just for a freak."

"Just for a freak, no. But, my old man, can you think of any other reason, not perhaps a freak?"

"What d'ye mean?" snapped Conn, turning round sharply.

"You were engaged to this lady, isn't it?"

"I—yes."

"Perfectly. Without doubt you loved her. When a man is engaged to a woman, a woman which he loves—because, my old man, we don't always love that woman which we marry—well, then, does he not tell her all? Even that which he ought not perhaps to tell? Blackbury, old rascal, have you not told your lady somethings which you——"

"We all do," agreed Blackbury, cutting him short. "More fools we. Your play, Des Roseaux."

Des Roseaux, selecting his card with as much nice care as if his life depended on the choice, laid it s'owly down on the table. Immediately afterward he detached himself from écarté, in gross and in detail, and turned to Conn, shaking a long forefinger emphatically at the younger man.

"Oh, my Conn, tell the truth! Have you not told the little Mademoiselle Deirdre where is your treasure, and what?"

"If I did?" parried Conn.

"Head of a Britannic pig, my friend! Can you not see what comes after?"

"He could not know," said Conn, springing to his feet. "How was he to—my God, if he has, I'll kill him, as sure as my name's——"

"You won't, whether he has or not," cut in Blackbury. He, too, had relinquished his cards, and turned round

in his chair to look at Conn. They were all looking at Conn now. The young man's face had turned the curious lemon-white that sunburned faces turn in moments of strong feeling. His eyes were mere dots of fire under their drawn-down brows; his mouth was open and trembling with rage. He tried to speak, half choked, and tried again.

"I'll kill him," he repeated, as if he had not heard Blackbury. "Des Roseaux, by God, I think you're right! I have been a fool. The loss of her seemed to beat me down so that I could not think. But where is she, where is she?" He laid a powerful hand on the slight shoulder of Des Roseaux, and shook him in his excitement.

"Finish then, you are shaking my bones! Where is she? Do I know? But if I'm right, my old man, I would, myself, go walk the country, and see if I shall not hear something."

"There's a market to-morrow," mused Conn. "Bush tribes come down to leave goods, shore tribes come up and leave price; you know it."

"Without doubt; it is my business to know these things."

"All the coast Johnnies will be there. If he has had her spirited away to some other island, one might— Thank you, Des Roseaux, thank you. You've given me new life." He was on his feet, taking down his helmet from the nail where it had hung all the afternoon.

"You will go home?"

"Yes, yes. I must get ready to be off at daylight." He had hardly a word now. His face was set with some firm purpose that needed no expression in speech. The yellow-white tinge had left him.

Blackbury, stacking his cards together to put them away, remarked, without looking up:

"No red-Indian business, Conn. But ask me for anything you want—boys,

boats, what you like. Myself, if needed."

"Yes," agreed Conn briefly. A word of good-by to Mrs. Carbery, and he was gone.

"Last night," remarked the lady sepulchrally, "I drew it down with the cards that there was coffins and inimies; and the inimies did be in it like fleas in a blanket. It be to be, I'm thinking, that the inimies was for him, and the coffin was for her, rest her soul." She took out a large, clean trade handkerchief surrounded with alphabets in red and blue, placed it before her eyes, and left the veranda.

Blackbury, sighing heavily, looked at Des Roseaux.

"Rosy," he said, using the familiar name that, for the sake of commissioner dignity, he never pronounced before others, "Rosy, do you actually think there may be anything in this?"

"I don't to know very well what I think," confessed Des Roseaux, "but all what I have said is quite possible. And if something had not happen to take Mr. Conn out of himself, why, my friend, there are too many firearms in this country for to be safe to a young man much disappointed in love."

"Now, I had rather thought," mused Blackbury, "that they had quarreled."

"But naturally! They are lovers; it is the trade of lovers, to quarrel. All the more was it bad he should have no thing to take him from himself, with this that ate into him. Say, Blackbury, once, you have quarreled with the lady for which you remain bachelor?"

John Bull, leaning on one hand, and holding on, as it were, to his own curly, grizzling locks, shook his wise head ever so little.

"It was the other thing, Rosy," he said. "There are only two."

"Not quarrel, therefore not woman. It was, then, money?"

"Put it want of money, Rosy, and you come near the mark. Lack of all

money, and you hit the mark. Beggars, Rosy, can't be choosers, especiall of titled ladies."

"She has been noble?"

"Aye," said John Bull. "Noble. And a nob'ewoman, too. She is the Marchioness of Kirkpatrick."

"But, Blackbury, the Marquis of Kirkpatrick has died!"

"Six months ago," agreed John Bull calmly, putting away his cards.

"And you?"

"And I—I'm British commissioner of the New Cumberlands. Good night, Des Roseaux. And look! Be sure you let me know of anything you hear. God knows but there might be something in it."

"In the affair of Miss Deirdre?"

"Aye, what else?"

CHAPTER XV.

Kalaka came across the dusty square, her grass skirts swaying, the native ornaments of bead and tooth, of pearl shell and clamshell and carved tusk, which she had resumed since her return, clinking with the quickness of her walk. She grinned unpleasantly at Child and Deirdre, who were sitting in the shade of the big hut. Then she remarked:

"Fursey, he come."

"What!" cried Deirdre, springing to her feet, her face white as the clouds above. Like the sound of hangman's feet along the corridor to the prisoner trembling in the condemned cell was this sudden, unexpected announcement of Ka'aka's to her. Fursey! But he had said four days, and it was only two! Four days might have given her a chance; Conn might have got together a force of the white people and ventured the risk of taking the town by storm. Child might have thought out some scheme, dulled and blurred as his mind seemed to be. But Fursey was returning, and there had not even been

time for the hazardous, uncertain message of her song to make its way.

Fursey returning!

It was late on the afternoon of the day that followed the market. The men had come back, bringing with them goods from the tribes of the island and the shore: salt in green-leaf packets, dried fish, store of sea shells and turtle shell for the making of native jewelry. The singing of Deirdre's air still went on; it had taken the village like a plague. She thought that, if she survived this terrible adventure, if she lived to be an old, old woman, in countries far away, never would she hear any one singing "Gypsy Lover" without instantly seeing the whole strange place: the dark huts of the village, the grove of drum trees with their hideous human faces, in the middle; the groups of naked brown men, herding in shadow, with their long, ever-restless gun barrels gleaming and moving faintly like reed beds of steel. She would smell dust and decay, wood smoke, pig, wet forest; she would hear the thunder drumming that made horrible the evenings; tremble again, as she had trembled, hiding in a corner of the hut the first night, while things unknown, unnamable, were being done outside.

If she got away— There had been some chance of that last night. Tonight, with Kalaka's news beating in her pulses like some bewildering drug, with Fursey near the town, she knew that there could be almost no chance.

"When he come?" she asked the girl breathlessly.

Kalaka, answering in a flood of native, was translated by Child. Fursey, it seemed, had been sighted by the spies of the village, early that morning, coming across from Wawaka Island. The spies who had seen him were treetop spies, perched on the border of the coastal natives' country. They had called the news to the nearest of the chain that stretched, at distances of a

mile or so, right up to the village. During the course of the morning, the news had leaped across a distance that no man could have traveled under many hours. Fursey was a good way behind it, but they thought he would be there by the time the moon was up.

Thus Kalaka spoke, grinning with malicious delight. She was quite aware that Deirdre feared and hated Fursey, and the fact seemed to console her, more or less, for the neglect of herself that she saw impending in the immediate future. Did not native custom compel a recent wife to serve an older one? Kalaka thought there might be fun for a brown woman charged with hatred against the white in the new arrangement.

Child, speaking in native, asked her a question. She answered it, nodding her head, with the word :

"Smitti!"

Smith! Too well Deirdre understood that her worst fears were likely to be realized. Fursey was coming, days earlier than he had been expected, and was bringing with him Smith, the renegade missionary; Smith, who was qualified to marry them.

Something must have happened. Fursey evidently had been scared by some movement on the part of the white people. The tale of her drowning, well though it had been concocted, might have failed at some essential point to convince. If that were so, he would be doing just what he was doing, traveling up with the intention of protecting himself by a forced marriage!

Deirdre knew that no marriage of hers would hold good in law. But what would be the use of telling Fursey this? It might sign her own death warrant. It could not save her from him.

Her limbs seemed to give way under her. She dropped on the log, and sat staring, twisting her hands together. Conn would come; she knew it. But he might come too late.

Through all the trouble, the thought of saving herself by disclosing Conn's secret never had appealed to her as in any way possible or useful. She was not so wildly romantic as to contemplate saving the secret of the treasure at the cost of her own life or honor. But she had known all along it would be no use to tell. Fursey had but dangled freedom before her as a bunch of carrots is dangled before a donkey's nose. It was against all his interests to let her go, and when had he ever studied anything except his interests?

She might be driven, by terrible means, to the disclosure, once she was thoroughly in his power, if he were certain she would not tell him without force. But on such a possibility she did not dare to dwell. She had one thing to think of, one only—how to get away. Within the hours before the rising of the moon lay her last chance.

Child, his enormous limbs outspread like a fallen tree on the ground beside her, looked up, and seemed to guess what she was thinking.

"It can be done," he said. Kalaka had moved off. "I can get you out, if I stay behind myself."

"Not to let them kill you? I could not."

"There isn't a chance of that. Don't worry. But if you do get out, it doesn't mean getting away. You don't know the bush. They wouldn't chase you, not the men from this village, if I quiet them. But others might. All the same, you can try, if you wish."

"What are you going to do?"

Without immediately answering her question, Child said:

"Kalaka will be easily settled. Look here." He showed her a small gourd bottle with a stopper of wood. Uncorking it, and letting a few crimson drops fall on the ground, he said:

"Betel nut, decoction strong enough to blow off the head of a buffalo. I'll catch the little jade, and pour it down

her neck. She'll sleep like the dead till to-morrow afternoon."

"But Fursey, he said he would kill her."

"So he would, if she was on Wawaka. Not here. The chief is Kalaka's brother, and he would murder and eat the whole crowd of them. He very nearly did it the time Fursey stole her away, but there was plenty of payment made, and he quieted down."

"If I can get out—" cried Deirdre, feeling new hope spring up.

"You'd better have your chance. I can't do anything till night."

"But Fursey will be here!"

"Not till moonrise, eleven o'clock. He didn't leave Wawaka early, and it's a good twelve hours. I tell you, I'll do what I can. You've made me remember all sorts of things. I can believe I was once a man, since I've met you."

"Can't you go back?" cried Deirdre pitifully to the strange, wild creature who lay on the ground looking up out of dead eyes. The dead eyes turned away as Child answered her heavily:

"Too late."

"Keep quiet till then," he went on presently. "Don't do or say anything to raise suspicion; it may be difficult. Have patience; we'll hope for the best."

He heaved himself up, lurched across the square, and disappeared somewhere among the huts. Deirdre was left alone. All round her the natives, loafing in the shade with their bamboo pipes and their inevitable guns, were singing the air that had taken their fancy. It was like a hive of bees humming in tune. The incongruity of the whole thing made her feel light-headed. She buried her face in her hands, and tried to think. To-night, to-night!

What was that? Mindful of Child's warning, she resisted the impulse to leap to her feet and listen eagerly. Instead, she listened without changing her attitude of despair; listened, but with

throbbing heart and ears sharpened almost to painfulness.

Somebody, outside the town, was singing "Gypsy Lover."

Now this, in view of the fact that the whole tribe had taken possession of the song, was not remarkable. But what was remarkable was the skillful, careful introduction into the air of fragments from another. She could hardly believe her ears, but the interpolations did sound like—sound like—Why, they were scraps from "Your Shadow on My Heart!"

Once this conviction took hold of her, she felt a revulsion of spirit so strong that she could have burst into tears. Instead, she sat quite still, and looked about her. Kalaka, drugged, apparently lay sleeping in the shadow of the women's house.

Deirdre, trembling all the while lest the malicious native girl should wake, lifted her head, and cautiously at first, but with full voice, as she saw that nobody was noticing, sang a line or two of "Your Shadow on My Heart." The singing in the village was beginning to die down; it was the hot hour of the day, when most of the natives slept. She paused, and listened again.

There! It was the tune of "Gypsy Lover" with the same little fragment from the other song lightly added. Just enough to tell her it was Conn singing, and no native. Not enough to give the fact away to listening ears. No words; just simple vocalizing.

She realized that, if Conn were indeed within earshot, he wou'd never risk drawing the fire of the natives on himself, and probably on her, by saying anything. That remained for her. Was Kalaka asleep? She strolled across and looked, as she passed by, at the plump brown figure lying in the shade of the women's house. If stertorous snores were evidence, Kalaka was resting well. Deirdre had seen the effects of betel nut often enough; she knew

that an overdose like that which Child had administered would probably hold for a night and half a day. No danger there.

Returning to her own side of the square, she lifted her voice and sang the gypsy song. At the end of it she broke into improvised words, sung to the same tune:

"Can you hear, can you hear, do you understand me?
He is coming back to-night, when the moon comes up.
When it's dark I will try and get away somehow.
Stay and wait; do not let them know that you are there."

Back to her, from the forest, came the inevitable gypsy song, and then just a line from "Come Into the Garden, Maud:"

"I am here—am here at the gate alone."

It was quickly vocalized, without words, but Deirdre understood. Conn would be close to the gate, after dark. "Do not sing any more; they have almost noticed,"

she sang carelessly. Some of the men were beginning to turn their heads and stare. Perhaps they had noticed something in the quality of the voice not quite like their own. She hoped they had not.

Nothing remained now but to wait, to hope that Child would succeed in his dealings with the men, whatever they might be, and that Fursey would not come too soon. Once outside the guarded gate of the town, once with Steve, she felt she could defy the world. Twelve hours of hard travel lay between her and civilization, such as Meliasi knew; Fursey and his gang were even now on the only road—— But there was no use crossing bridges before you came to them.

"Nelson used to say," she reminded herself, "that something always had to be left to chance."

There was not much food to be had that night; only a few cold lumps of yam and a handful of bananas, which Child secured somewhere and brought to her.

"They've got another celebration on," he explained. "Saving their appetites." "Won't you have some?"

He looked at her oddly, and shook his head.

She was not hungry, but she ate. It would not do to face the road that night fasting—the road down which she was to go with Steve. The words of her own song crept into her mind and nestled there:

To the last long camp of all, when life's last dusk is falling,
Gypsy lover, gypsy love, I'll go with you.

Aye and she would. All would be right. She felt it; there was a spirit of prophecy abroad in the air of this strange night, and it was falling on her, as the night itself was falling, gently, surely, irresistibly. She and Steve would be husband and wife, at last. She knew that as surely as if she had seen the altar made ready, the priest standing before it with his open book.

Again the thunder drumming began; the dance swept round the idols. The feast to-night was to take place inside one of the houses, the tall house at the opposite end from Deirdre's hut, belonging to the chief. Child was not to be seen.

He came at last, and she scarcely knew him. He had taken off his European clothes, and was clad almost as the native men, only a cloth round the middle and a raffle of ornamental leaves and feathers tied to his limbs. She started back with a cry. Child looked at her almost vacantly. His eyes, wide and glassy, showed that the drug had him under its influence again.

"I came to say good-by," was all his speech.

"Oh, why? I'll see you again," Deir-



The writing began abruptly: "This is for Deirdre. I did what I could. I hear she escaped.
Fursey is caught."

dre managed to say. There was something in the incident that frightened her; she could not say what.

He did not take the slightest notice. "I came to say good-by," he repeated. She stretched out her hand, but he only looked at it, and made no attempt to take it.

There was a moment's silence. He turned his back slowly and slowly walked away. She saw him enter the chief's great house. There came a tremendous sound of shouting, and the door was shut.

It grew dark, grew darker; grew on toward moonrise. Deirdre, waiting in an agony, unable to make up her mind—for would not those unmoving figures of riflemen at the gate turn on her and slay her if she ventured even to approach?—saw a movement run through the ranks of the men and women who waited outside the shut door of the house. For a moment the door opened; there came out a sound of savage cheering; something was said; a laugh went up.

The two riflemen at the gate, look-

ing at her, lowered their guns and laid them on the ground.

Hardly daring to believe she saw right, Deirdre, a wild, disheveled little figure, crept timorously toward the wolf-mouth gate of the town, doubled herself up, slipped through—the sentries looking all the time deliberately away—and found herself on the dark, wet track outside. Dazzled still by the flaring torches of the town, dazed by the drumming, she could not see where she was. She crept forward a step or two, with hands outstretched, feeling. They touched something live and warm. Before she had time to spring back, Conn's arms were round her, holding her as if never again, in life or death, would they let her go.

CHAPTER XVI.

Deirdre's first thought, when released from that long embrace, was purely feminine :

"Thank Heaven he can't see me!"

Since the moment when she had been bundled into Fursey's canoe, her appearance had never cost her a moment of concern. She had accepted Kalaka's gown, glad to cover herself with greater decency than her bathing costume permitted; she had put on Fursey's shoes, rather because she feared the rough mountain roads than because of any dislike to going barefoot, like a native or a beggar. She had not washed for three days; she had not "done" her hair, save for an imperfect smoothing out with the Spanish back comb she wore. And she had not troubled at all over the ragged, dirty, unkempt appearance she knew herself to present.

Now, in a moment, things were changed, and even as Conn, his arm round her waist to support her, hurried her along the track, she could not help thinking and planning how to find a stream before broad daylight, and wash her face in it, how to use some

pool as a mirror, twist up her long masses of hair becomingly, rub the worst stains of coconut and clay out of her poor dress. Surely, if Steve saw her looking as she knew she must look now, he would not love her any more!

As for Conn, two thoughts, while he hurried Deirdre away from the neighborhood of the cannibal town, made fierce turmoil in his breast. The first was Fursey. He longed, as he had never longed for anything in his life, to kill the little scoundrel, to tear his shrieking life out of him with ruthless hands and throw the body into the deep seas, there, for the first time in its existence, to be made offenseless and pure. The second was Deirdre herself. So far as he could think in that pressed journey over the rough road, holding the girl up with all his strength, he was beginning to realize, through some deep intuition such as only lovers know, that he had wronged her in his thought when he had flung away from her that day upon the shore and told her, in bitter mockery, that she might "tell her tale to the marines." Without question, he believed it now. He knew that for his frantic jealousy of that student husband of hers there had been no foundation.

As for Fursey, whatever his ill intentions might have been, Deirdre had so far escaped them. This much she told him in the short, hurried sentences that gave him the history of the last few terrible days.

She was his, all his. But if he had been a little less quick to guess the significance of her song on the lips of the mountain men, if he had not been able to find the way to the town, if he had been even a little later in arriving, the best he could have hoped for would have been to know that his love was wandering, terrified, unprotected, in dark forests full of wild cannibal natives of the bush; the worst would have

been to find her in Fursey's power. He held her tighter at the thought, and drew her on more quickly.

It was well not to speak too much in these perilous places: The New Cumberland native, wandering at night in search of enemies, had, he well knew, a habit of firing at random in the direction of any sudden sound. Respect for human life among the natives of the New Cumberlands was nonexistent; among the whites there was very little.

"If I had the country," was his sudden thought, "how I could tame it!"

But no one had the country, and the cannibals, titular owners, were abroad that night, and Fursey, worse than any cannibal, was at that moment making his way toward them on the track as fast as he could go. Conn might, for Deirdre's sake, have reluctantly avoided encounter with him, had it been possible to travel by any other way. It was not possible. The dense tropic forest, hard enough to penetrate in daylight, with the aid of clearing knife and ax, was hopeless to travel through by night. The track was their only way.

Now the moon began to rise, showing faintly at first through the dense screen of trees, and afterward taking with one leap the ascent into full air. The track was a ribbon of silver; the forest, a velvet wall. Conn looked anxiously ahead. It would not do to be surprised by Fursey.

"We'll halt for a minute," he whispered to Deirdre, totally unconscious, after his male fashion, of her sensitive shrinking back from observation, now that the light had come. "Best to hear him before he hears us."

"What—what are you going to do?" asked the girl anxiously. She felt much as if she had captured a thunderbolt and tied it to her ear. It dragged her along, but whither would its wild, unchecked, untamable course take it? What disasters would it let loose? No thought of begging or remonstrance

came to her. She knew Conn too well. If he was going to kill Fursey, there on the road at her feet, he would do it, and no man nor woman, god nor devil, could stop him.

Conn hesitated. He knew what his pounding blood desired, cried out for.

"No red-Indian business," rang in his ears. Much though he chafed against Blackbury's restraining hand, he respected it; respected tough John Bull himself. Blackbury was in the right. Killing was murder, after all, even in the New Cumberlands, even when punishment could not follow.

Besides—Deirdre! To kill a man in fight because of what he had done to her—what would be said? Only too well he knew.

No. Fursey should live. But it would not be to enjoy life, to reign any longer as king upon Wawaka, to carry off women, white or black, and brutalize every one with whom he came in contact. Conn had made up his mind. It might be, from what Deirdre had told him, that they could never marry. That was as it must be; he would not think about it yet. But the man who had tried to take her from him, had all too nearly done it, would not remain to triumph over him.

As knights of old had been used to do, he loosed his lady's arm, and led her to the side of the road.

"Get in among the trees," he told her. "Hide till I come back for you."

She did not cling to him with her hands, but her eyes, in the waxing moonlight, held him.

"If you don't come back—" she breathed.

"I shall. But if I don't, you must hide till morning, and try to get down to the coast. Take my knife; it's big enough to be some use." He buckled it round her waist, looked at her, made to speak again, but shut his lips. He wrung her hand, and left her.

There was the sound of his footsteps,

soft and cautious, for a minute or two, and then silence. The moon climbed higher over the trees. Thin, snake-like rustlings sounded in the forest. A lizard woke and made a chirping noise, like kisses falling rapidly.

"That lizard," remembered Deirdre, "chirps when it hears something that one can't hear oneself. What has it heard?"

She strained her ears, but could hear nothing, nothing save the crackle of tiny twigs where tiny things went walking, and the snake sounds, and the kissing sound of the lizard.

Then, quite a long time after, came the sound of steps upon the track. Conn was returning, alone. She saw him, helmet off and head thrown back to let the night wind play upon his face. His hair seemed to be standing almost straight. There was a look about him of fires recently quenched. Something, it seemed, had blazed up fiercely in the half hour of his absence from her, and the scorch of it still lingered. When he came closer, she saw that one sleeve was torn away, and that there was a dark-red bruise on his cheek.

"Have you killed Fursey?" she asked, creeping forth into the moonlight. She was afraid of him, when he looked like this, but she loved him. God! She loved him!

He did not answer her, save by a smile. He stretched out his hand to help her from the bank by the side of the track.

"Come down," he said. "The road is clear."

They traveled on again, Conn's arm supporting her. She looked at him once or twice, and saw that he was half smiling. She knew he could not have smiled like that if his hands had been stained with blood, and her heart took ease.

They came to a small clearing by the way. The moon, now high and bright, poured down into it, turning it to a

lake of molten silver. Plain to be seen in the midst of it was a figure tied up in a bundle and lying on the ground. Two other figures stood near it. They were all white men.

"I suppose you know these gentry," said Conn. "This beauty, tied up on the ground, is Mr. Fursey; he's going to spend the next few weeks in jail in Fiji, and the next thousand years in hell. He has enough murders on his conscience—if he had one—to hang a dozen men, and I'll have a schoonerful of witnesses over to Fiji with him to prove it. We'll start in a week or so, in my boat, and I'll sail her myself."

"To Fiji!"

"To Fiji, to hell, or to Connaught—anywhere that I can find justice for this brute. If there's no law in the New Cumberlands, that's a fact that works two ways. I can kidnap him and bully the witnesses, and do any dashed thing I like to get him hung. These are two of them, but they're not going to Fiji. They have promised me, like good little boys, that they'll carry Fursey down to Meliasi for me, on condition of being let off. Fursey can't walk. He's got a sprained ankle, where he took a toss just now, and I've an idea one of his wrists is broken."

"You put my left eye out," growled one of them, whom Deirdre recognized as the wretched Smith. The other was the man she had only known as "Mac."

"Oh, no, my good man!" answered Conn cheerfully. "I leave that sort of thing to Fursey. I copped you a good one that'll mark you for three weeks or thereabouts; nothing more. If you knew anything about fighting, which I swear you don't——"

"It wasn't fair play."

"What, one to three?"

"Not when you took us by surprise, and knocked out Fursey first blow, and tripped up Mac. I don't call that fighting; that's circus stuff."

"I told you you know nothing about

fighting, my boy. That eye of yours is blind because it's swelled up. As for circus stuff, if there's any circus about, you're it. Get on, Joey." He gave him a slight, contemptuous kick. Smith, eying him furiously, picked up his end of the bundle that was Fursey—a groaning, complaining bundle it was—and, helped by Mac, took his place in front of Conn. Once more they started down the track.

Halfway, when the sun was rising, they made a camp by a stream to rest. Conn, who had been carrying a little bread sack, strapped to one shoulder, unslung it and brought out a loaf and a tin of meat.

"I never travel without tucker," he explained. "Good thing I had this." He shared it, Deirdre was glad to see, equally among the men, and gave the groaning Fursey water out of his helmet. She, herself, slipping away, found the pool she had been longing for, found a band of broad, green, satiny pandanus leaf to girdle her loose dress, found a red bush flower to twist in her hair. She washed and smoothed and preened herself like one of the pigeons cooing over her head, and came out from the forest again a picturesque, if a ragged little figure. Conn threw her a glance of laughing approval.

"More than halfway now," he said. "The next is the easiest half, and that cuts distance."

Noon came, and found them emerging from the forest, with the coast line full in view. They turned a corner, and there was Meliasi, huddling on the shore; and the tall, green islands of Waka, Wawa, and Wawaka, and the Residency Island.

"Oh!" cried Deirdre. "Look, look!"

Conn was already looking, and so were the carriers, Mac and Smith, who had each let out a sudden oath as they turned the corner of the road and came in sight of the harbor. For there, in the deep blue of the anchorage, beyond

the tumbling reef, stood out the shape of a tall gray warship, flying the British flag.

"Why, she has come, after all," remarked Conn. "She has been expected, and has disappointed us so often, that one began to believe she wasn't ever coming. This saves me a run to Fiji in that little hooker of mine; would have taken a month, I dare say. The man-of-war'll do it in six days, easy. Fursey, you've got three weeks less to live than you had five minutes ago."

"Oh, don't!" winced Deirdre. Conn only laughed.

"There's something going on," he said presently, as they drew nearer. He had amazingly long-sighted eyes. The others, although staring hard, could make out nothing of note. It seemed as if a crowd had collected near the jetty, but a crowd always did collect there on the arrival of any ship.

"What is it?" asked Deirdre, as she saw him staring with wide, excited eyes.

"Hurry, you swine!" was his answer, addressed to the carriers. He seized Deirdre by the arm and drew her along. "I want to see," he said. "There's a point close to here." They reached the point; it was rock, running high and clear of the road. Conn leaped up it like a deer, and stood for a minute. Then he snatched off his sun helmet and swung it wildly round his head, cheering, "Hooray, hooray!"

"Sing 'God Save the King,' Deirdre!" he called to her, and started the air himself.

Deirdre, afraid that the excitement of the night had temporarily touched his mind, nevertheless joined in, and sang the verse. At the end, Conn came down. He still held his helmet, and was waving it about.

"They've run up the Union Jack ashore," he cried. "The man-of-war has come to annex. The New Cumberlands are ours!"

"What about France?" demanded

Deirdre. She had not stayed at the Residency without discovering the urgency of that question.

"Oh, we must have had to pay through the nose for her interest, big slabs of Africa or something of the kind! Never mind; we can afford it. Glorious, glorious! This is the end of the old days in the Cumberlands."

"If this had happened a year ago, you wouldn't have had all the trouble about your secret," observed Deirdre.

"Oh, that!" laughed Conn. "I forgot! See here, you Fursey, and the other swine. Want to know what I found? I found pearls, pearls by the quart, by the bucket, in a cave right alongside the dancing ground, dropped there for centuries through the cracks, under the shell heaps, and preserved by the sea. Hey, what do you think of that?"

"Steve, Steve!" cried Deirdre, convinced now that he was really going mad.

"You wonder why I tell them? Well, this is why. You remember the big storm before the time I took you down into the cave?"

"Yes."

"It was a very big one, and it brought down lots, more than I had seen for a long time. Well, that was the last."

"Last of the pearls?"

"Yes. Of course, I always knew it must end some day, as they had only been falling down for a certain period, and no more had come from the ground above for a long time. But I didn't think— However, the big storm did it; cleaned the place right out. Next time I went, there wasn't so much as a necklace left."

"Are you sorry?" asked the girl.

"Can't say I am. I had my whack out of it, and no one ever found out, anyhow. Now let's crack on a bit, if you feel up to it, and get into Meliasi. I'm dying to see what's going on."

"Steve," asked the girl, as they neared

the town, "what does this mean?" She drew her hand across and away from her mouth, with a tearing motion, as she had seen Child do in the village.

"That? It's the cannibal sign; means, 'Give me a man to eat.' Why, Deirdre, are you feeling tired again? You're as white as a sheet."

CHAPTER XVII.

"I regret extremely," said the commander, "that the news should have arrived by this boat. Not, of course, on your account," he looked toward Blackbury—a Frenchman would have bowed—"but because it deprives the Imperial Government of your services at this critical and important point in the history of the islands."

The speech was formal, but it seemed to please John Bull. He smiled a little, and drew a breath that was something like a sigh.

"I'm rather sorry, too, in a way," he allowed. "Still, I've done my bit here. It may be as well to have new men for new times. And the place at home will want looking after."

"You were originally the heir?" asked the commander with courteous interest.

"Till my uncle married again. No one would have thought his family wouldn't survive an old beggar like me. All things come to him— Well!" John Bull caught back a small sigh.

"Your friends will congratulate you." The commander's tone was less formal than before. "I—in fact, some of them have already done so, through me."

"Some?" John Bull, turning his head, looked attentive.

"One, at least. A very charming—the Dowager Marchioness of Kirkpatrick, in fact. Quite young for a dowager."

Blackbury seemed to be working a sum in his head.

"Quite young," he answered pres-

ently. He changed the conversation. "This place will take some pulling into order," he said.

"Yes," replied the commander. The thought in his mind, unspoken, was that it might be well a younger man should step in. "Of course," he remarked, "the appointment would have been offered—is offered, in fact—to you."

"I'm obliged. But the Imperial Government won't lose; rather the contrary, if—do I understand that a recommendation of mine would carry weight?"

"The greatest. You have some one in your mind?"

"If he would take it. A man with a large independent fortune, resident varsity man, quite the——"

"Do you, by any chance, mean Mr. Conn?"

"I do."

"I have heard of him. I shou'd think it would be—— But, you understand, nothing could be promised."

"I understand," said John Bull, nodding his slow head, knowing that the matter was as good as settled. "We could have him in and sound him. But, of course, no promises."

An hour later, some one came tapping eagerly at the screen before the open door of Deirdre's room.

She was lying down. It was two days since her return, but the weariness of the long strain and hardship she had suffered seemed to have taken hold of her slight body, and she spent most of the time resting in her quiet room, blinds drawn down, soft sounds of the sea below coming, faint with distance, through the open doors. A great, dark melancholy was creeping over her in these days of regained safety that should have been so happy. After all, where was the use? What was everything in the world worth, without the one thing she craved?

"Can you come out?" asked Conn's voice. It had a new note in it, a tone of elation and excitement.

"Perhaps he has heard something," she thought, and sprang off her bed. "Something," with her, always meant something about Rogers. She did not dare tell herself what the "something" was that she really craved to hear.

Conn, waiting, drew her to a quiet corner of the veranda.

"What do you think?" he said. "I've had a strong hint that they will make me administrator of the New Cumberlands, to do what I like, pull the place into order, organize native troops, burn out the wasps' nest there on Wawaka. How do you like that?"

Deirdre, as well as the rest of the house, had heard about the change that was removing Blackbury from the islands, and sending him home to take his place as a British landowner. She had not, however, even guessed at the other possibility. Conn had. It had never left his mind from the moment in which he had heard of Blackbury's retirement. It warmed his very heart; it put the crown on every ambition of his life.

To Deirdre the news came as mingled honey and gall. Conn was to be the ruler of the New Cumberlands; that was right, and entirely as it should be. But who was to be his queen?

She turned white with the pain of the moment, but bravely congratulated him.

"Oh, I'm glad!" she said. "You will make a splendid administrator, and your being independent will help so much."

"I should think it will," agreed Conn, still self-absorbed. "I can run my own steamer, if they won't give me one, and pay my own soldiers. Worth having, isn't it? To write one's name across the map of a new country. I'll leave the New Cumberlands very different from the state in which I—why, Deirdre, what is it?"

For she was crying, half with the old, bitter pain of the noose about her neck and half with a new, vague feel-

ing that the Cumberlands themselves might prove a very formidable rival. Would Conn go on caring for a woman he could never marry, when he had all this to occupy his mind and his ambition?

But Conn was quite sure.

"Of course, girlie," he said, "you and I will have to run it together. Your husband? Oh, we'll find some way! It's impossible that there can be no way out. Don't lose heart." He kissed her, and left her, only half consoled.

Late in the afternoon, as she was sitting on her veranda, listening vaguely to Mrs. Carbery's talk, which ran much upon the crown coming up in the cards, and the ship that meant luck coming in three nights in succession, she saw a bush native coming slowly, nervously, up the track that led to the house. She watched him, saw him disappear in the direction of Blackbury's official room. It seemed only a little while—it was in reality some time—before he came out again. This time he made his way to the kitchen, as native messengers did who were ordered to go and eat, pending an answer to their messages.

Blackbury's heavy form came round the corner of the veranda. Deirdre noticed that he was looking much younger and brighter this last day or two; she almost hated him for it. She knew that John Bull's old, forgotten story was coming to life and to a happy end. While she— It was hard, very hard, to be generous, to rejoice in the happiness of another, starving, herself, for happiness denied.

"This parcel has come from inland. The messenger won't say how. He is a bushie, and he's mighty scared. I sent him to get some tucker, but he won't have any for fear it might be poisoned," remarked Blackbury. "Will you take it?"

"For me?" Deirdre held out her hand. The parcel was tied up in dried banana leaves and fastened with coco-

nut-fiber string. "What can it be?" she asked.

"Better open it and see," recommended Blackbury, who had his own feelings of curiosity in the matter.

Out of the bundle, when the strings were cut, fell a sheet of bark and a small packet, wrapped in red trade cotton.

"There's writing on the bark," prompted John Bull. Deirdre took it up. It was fine, white inner bark, flattened for writing use, and it had been so used, a charcoal stick taking the place of pen or pencil. The writing began abruptly:

This is for Deirdre. I did what I could. I hear she escaped. Fursey is caught. He threatened me for years. He knew about my stay in the outer islands, and what fell to me there. I had climbed up. He threw me down. I shall never climb up again now. Their white king was dead. They wanted another. The last man refused to eat with them.

"Oh!" cried Deirdre, letting the bark sheet fall to the ground. She understood.

Blackbury picked it up and calmly read on:

He died. I do not know how. I opened the packet. Read it. They will never kill me, but you will never hear of me again. I am dead.

JOHN HAMILTON CHILD, M. A., OXON.

Blackbury, looking at Deirdre's troubled face, took the red packet calmly from her hand and opened it. It contained a visiting card; no more. The card, which was old and somewhat worn, read:

Arthur Rogers,
820, Lower Leeson Street,
Dublin.

"Here," he cried to Mrs. Carbery, "bring her salts, feathers, something! She's fainting."

For Deirdre, with one look at the card, had fallen against the back of her chair.

"Hold her up," said Blackbury.

"Whethen I'll do no such an' a thing," answered Mrs. Carbery with fine contempt. "Lay her on the flure, sir. Head down. That's it. Now she's opening her eyes. Are ye better, gurl?"

"All right," said Deirdre faintly.

"Daughther of Ayre," said Mrs. Carbery in a stage whisper, "was that yer husband?"

"Yes," answered Deirdre. "Please let me get up; I'm quite all right. It was only the sudden shock."

"Ye will lay there," pronounced Mrs. Carbery, "till I get ye just the sign of brandy from the dining room." She went to fetch it. Deirdre accepted the commissioner's arm to a lounge. "I'm really quite all right," she repeated.

"You don't look," observed Blackbury, "as if the news were likely to break your heart."

"He was in an asylum for years," said Deirdre. "I don't know even now how he got out. He must have escaped and changed his name, and somehow become sane enough to pass. I—I always thought—I couldn't understand, but there was something about him when I met him here——"

"Met who here?" cried Blackbury.

"I thought you knew. Mr. Gatehouse."

"Good heavens, my girl, how do you know yourself? Gatehouse is absent on leave. He has outstayed it a lot, it's true, but——"

Deirdre silently held out the card. On the reverse side was a sentence, written in faint pencil:

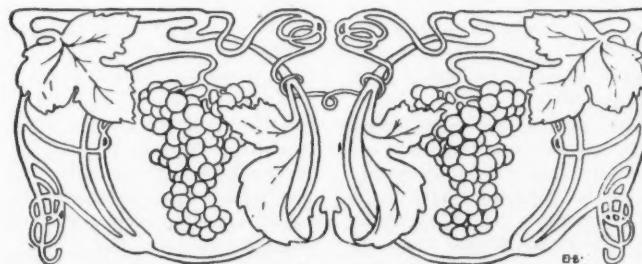
If anything should happen to me, take this to my legal wife, Deirdre Rogers, born Deirdre Rose. I promise never to claim her alive.

ARTHUR ROGERS,
known as George Gatehouse.

She looked at the bit of cardboard that carried in its narrow compass the fate of her future life. She felt the noose fall from round her neck. She was free.

Out on the garden walk, the new King of Meliasi was coming to her swiftly. Beside her stood the old king. In the far mountains, the king who had died, unknowingly, for her, sat throned and crowned, silent, with the silent dead. And the man who had knowingly died for her, and who still lived, passed into silence.

THE END.



A COLORED COMEDY

Green with jealousy, he told her black lies. Whereupon she flew into a white rage and told him he was yellow. Both of them saw red. Purpling, they parted, she to the blues and he to cultivate a brown taste for the morning.

Indigestion

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

DIGESTIVE troubles are on the increase, in our country at least. We should, therefore, give greater heed to the hygiene of the entire alimentary tract.

Indigestion is the most common ailment of mankind, in a civilized state, and it gives rise to more ill health and loss of physical beauty than any other affection. Stretched a little, it may be said that indigestion is the cause of almost every physical ill. Mental conditions give rise to it, also, and it is well known that emotional stress affects the appetite and often completely inhibits the digestive forces.

Given a good, sound digestion one may be quite sure of reaching a ripe old age in full possession of all one's faculties and with adequate attractiveness, for every stage in life has its compensatory good looks.

This statement must be qualified, however, by another: the hope held out in it can only be fulfilled if the digestive tract is properly cared for. Those who are sound "digestively" most frequently abuse the digestive organs, and ultimately succumb to grave disorders which have their beginnings in gastric disturbances of one kind or another.

It is decidedly true that what is one man's meat is another man's poison. Some persons go on, year after year,

indulging their taste for foods which are harmful to them, and although the system becomes tolerant and rounds out an average length of life, they could lead healthier, happier, and longer lives if they would but heed the danger signals—symptoms of indigestion.

Primitive man suffered as little from digestive troubles as do wild animals. When domestic animals are permitted to select their own foods, they are similarly immune, but man has lost this marvelous instinct. His civilized taste mistakes what pleases his palate for what is good for his stomach. Until quite recently he overloaded his digestive tract three times daily with clock-like regularity.

For years we were taught that a good digestion depended upon ingesting food at a prescribed hour. Now, primitive man was not bound to fixed hours; he ate when hunger urged. If food was not forthcoming he fasted. To-day we are applying these primitive methods to overcome many malconditions of the digestive organs deliberately permitted through faulty dietetics.

Primitive man has always been regarded as a hunter and a ravenous eater of flesh. In reality, he killed and ate meat only when plant life—roots, bulbs, and berries—was unavailable. Plant life was the most usual food. Often

there was a combination of plant and animal food, just as there is to-day.

Since dietetic errors have made inroads upon our latter-day health through the multiplication and refinements of our foodstuffs, we have been forced to adopt man's original methods of feeding himself, in order to find palliation for our manifold digestive troubles.

The history of foods, while intensely fascinating, must not occupy our time here. But in the days before man substituted paps and sugars for whole grains and the native sweet residing in plants and berries, he and his offspring were blessed with good, sound teeth and strong, sturdy bodies.

Digestion begins in the mouth, and, because of this, the mouth or oral cavity has taken on a greater significance with our appreciation of its immense importance to the digestive tract.

Saliva not only moistens our food, converts starches into sugars, but also stimulates the flow of gastric juice. The teeth not only tear and grind our food, but mince it into minute particles for easier handling by the digestive juices of the stomach and small intestine. Coarse foods preserve the teeth and engender a rich flow of saliva, both so essential to the proper digestion and subsequent assimilation of foods. White flour, sugars—pastry foods—are ruinous to the teeth, do not stimulate the salivary glands, and lie at the root of most digestive evils, because soft foods require practically no chewing.

Too much stress cannot be placed upon nature's method of conserving the digestive organs—chewing all food to a creamy mass and moistening it completely with saliva before permitting it to leave the mouth. By this means alone the health of countless dyspeptics has been restored.

To repeat: the most common ailment to which flesh succumbs is undoubtedly *indigestion*. It is a loose term, loosely

applied; for while every disturbance of the digestive tract is accompanied by more or less "indigestion," the term implies a certain amount of discomfort with definite gastric symptoms. Chronic dyspepsia has become less common in the last ten years, because it originates in starchy indigestions, and it always arises in persons using large quantities of white flour and other starchy foods who likewise fail to masticate and moisten their food thoroughly with saliva.

In other words, the first step in digestive troubles arises from haste in eating, because starches are not converted into sugars before the food leaves the mouth.

Another frequent source of trouble is drinking with meals. The use of liquid to moisten food is fatal to good digestion. The American custom of iced drinks is a pernicious one, as cold checks the flow of saliva. Too much water dilutes the gastric juice. The quantity of this secretion in twenty-four hours amounts to three pints. While water is a great solvent and even more necessary to the system than food, the person who has schooled himself to forgo its use at meal times is said to have accomplished a great achievement.

Latter-day dietetics have taught us to eat only when hungry and to chew all foods thoroughly, so lessening the quantity consumed and the danger of overloading the stomach. Acute indigestion is usually caused by a combination of rapid eating and overeating. The stomach full of slightly masticated food rebels, and cries out for relief with acute pain, distention, flatulence, eructations, and so on. In the beginning this condition is quickly remedied by loosening the clothing and sipping quantities of very hot water to which some sodium bicarbonate has been added. The soda brings up the gas quickly, so reducing the flatus; the heat allays the pain; the hot water speedily

dissolves the heavy food and facilitates its rapid passage into the duodenum—"second stomach"—where the starches again come in contact with an alkaline medium—the pancreatic juice and bile—so enabling the digestion to be completed.

Acute indigestion is sometimes induced by eating decomposed foods. This disturbance is in the nature of ptomaine poisoning, and the first remedy is to empty the stomach of all food by means of wine of ipecac or, better still, a teaspoonful of dry mustard dissolved in a cup of warm, not hot, water. A mustard plaster over the pit of the stomach, absolute quiet, with hot-water bags to the extremities, if these are cold, will quiet the sufferer until the doctor comes, if medical aid is necessary.

Repeated attacks of acute indigestion call for regulation of mealtimes; careful selection of all foods; the elimination, for instance, of hot breads, pastries, sweets, fried, made-over, highly seasoned dishes; the substitution of dry bread—none whatever is better—steamed green vegetables, fruit juices, and cooked fruit, eliminating bananas, pears, and apples. Milk is an ideal food and forms an excellent diet in cases of acute gastritis. Warm milk eaten—that is, held in the mouth before swallowing—induces a copious flow of viscid saliva exceedingly beneficial to a sick stomach. This suggestion faithfully carried out for several days completely restores the tone of an average healthy stomach in the throes of acute gastritis.

For acute indigestion, powders containing pepsin, five grains; bismuth sub-nitrate, five grains; one to be taken every three hours, are helpful. When acute pain is accompanied by nausea and vomiting, powders containing oxalate of cerium, two grains; subnitrate of bismuth, ten grains; taken every two or three hours, quickly relieve the condition.

In acid stomach—again caused by white flour and sugar indigestion—these must be eliminated from the diet and an antacid preparation used, as follows: sodium bicarbonate, ten grains; bismuth carbonate, ten grains; magnesium carbonate, fifteen grains; mucilage of acacia, fifteen minims; distilled peppermint water, one ounce. A tablespoonful of this mixture in a little water every hour. This is excellent for water brash, heartburn, and the like.

Nervous dyspepsia is a common ailment in America. It is caused by mental stress, emotionalism, and worry. Then experiments have proved that there occurs relaxation and a decided lessening in the motor activity of the stomach and entire alimentary tract, so that digestion is often completely checked. The appetite fails. The secretions are diminished. The subject frequently becomes a confirmed dyspeptic.

Aromatic spirits of ammonia, a teaspoonful in a little water before meals, relieves the sensation of nausea, headache, and general discomfort which is habitual with some instances of nervous indigestion. A heaping teaspoonful of sodium phosphate in a glass of hot water, taken on arising, flushes out the stomach and digestive tract and prepares it for the business of the day. Nervous dyspeptics should avoid all excitement. They should cultivate above all things a placid mind. It is contrary to their natures, but many persons have succeeded. It is the only way to overcome the trouble.

For nervous dyspepsia:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pulverized rhubarb | $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 dram |
| Bicarbonate of soda | 2 drams |
| Tincture of nux vomica..... | 2 drams |
| Peppermint water enough to make | 4 ounces |

Take two teaspoonfuls in a little water after meals.

In chronic conditions, where the stomach and other digestive organs have become weakened through repeated at-

tacks, where the secretions are so reduced that digestion is scarcely possible, and the health and strength of the individual have become markedly impaired, organotherapy holds out its magic hand, and leads the way to comfort, renewed health, and physical attractiveness. Organotherapy means the use of animal organs or animal juices in the treatment of human ailments. In digestive troubles, for instance, the gastric juice of the pig is employed, because it most closely resembles that of human gastric juice. The pig may live for years and the gastric juice be drawn off daily. The animal thrives under the treatment accorded him in the laboratories, and his yield of pure, healthy gastric juice is a boon to suffering mankind.

A serious derangement of the health may result from dilatation of the stomach as the underlying cause. It is a lack of the muscular tone in the walls of this organ. When you make a mental picture of this condition in any tissue with which you are familiar, you can form an idea of the appearance of the stomach when so affected.

The condition may follow repeated gastric disturbances or be transient after fatigue, or a general breakdown, from prolonged nursing, insufficient food, persistent overwork, lack of sleep, anything which lowers the general physical tone. Women who have labored arduously and borne an extra nerve strain are prone to it as are women of the poorer classes.

Now, in order that food be properly digested in the stomach, it is put through a churning process in that organ, by means of a strong, wavelike motion entirely involuntary, the motor quality of the stomach, as mentioned before. In relaxation of its walls, this part of digestion is feebly performed, sometimes not at all.

Consequent thereto we have indigestion, retention of food in the stom-

ach, fermentation, and eructations. Usually constipation follows and a laxative is always required.

Relief from work and worry, with good and abundant food and change of air to a bracing climate, are the best measures for restoring a dilated stomach. The symptoms of indigestion, the various evidences of dyspepsia which always accompany the condition, are temporarily overcome with digestants, starvation diet, and the like, but no permanent cure is effected unless the underlying condition is overcome. As it progresses, there is diminished secretion of gastric juice. Naturally the feeble acting, distended walls of the stomach are unable to expel their contents, even though the peptic glands can functionate properly.

Here organotherapy is of supreme value, as it enables the digestive organs to rest and renew themselves, while the food is taken care of by a supply of animal cells and juices.

There is a very common condition accompanied by spasmodic pain in the stomach which is apt to alarm the sufferer, as it is usually unattended by familiar symptoms of chronic indigestion. Now, many persons endure the vague discomforts of manifold gastric disturbances throughout a lifetime with complacency, but in *gastralgia*—as it is called—the pain is agonizing, boring, cutting, burning, and may be localized to the pit of the stomach, or it radiates around, giving rise to girdle pains. The attacks end abruptly, frequently with vomiting of mucous and unchanged food, after which there is great hunger and food is partaken of without distress and with a great relish. It is more frequent in men than in women, and is a type of digestive trouble markedly on the increase.

There is another form of gastralgia common in anaemic women; the pain comes immediately after taking food, so that the habit of eating very little is

formed, and the health often runs down to an alarming degree. This form of gastralgia is often treated for gastric ulcer. It disappears wonderfully under suitable treatment, iron, especially the iron powder food referred to in previous articles, and warm milk, so coaxing the stomach back to bear ordinary diet by easy stages.

Every one who suffers in the slightest from digestive disturbances, or who desires to strengthen the digestive tract should eliminate white-flour foods from his diet. Every one should deliberately cultivate habits of completely

chewing and thoroughly moistening all foodstuffs with saliva before swallowing; should never eat to satiety, so resting these organs; should give them an internal bath of quite hot water every few days; should vary the monotony of his diet by subsisting on fruit one or two days in each month; should live at all times upon a rational diet.

NOTE: Doctor Whitney will gladly give readers full data on animal juices, iron-tonic food in powder form, digestants, and further helps in overcoming functional ailments of the digestive tract.

WHAT READERS ASK

JOHN DOE.—I am sorry you are having so much foot trouble. There are some excellent remedies put out by a physician-chiropractor, with which I will gladly make you acquainted. Progressive shoe dealers are also employing graduates in chiropracy to look into the foot needs of their clientele. Have you inquired if there is such a one in your locality?

ELAINE M. M.—This is a formula for a good tooth powder: Precipitated chalk, nine ounces; orris root powder, two ounces; camphor, one ounce.

GRACE M.—Lack of bust development is not always dependent upon a state of health. The mammary glands are sometimes defective; in that case, stimulation may awaken them. Some young women show no evidences of growth in this situation until the dawn of maternity, then nature takes a hand; for these conditions there is a wonderful preparation on the market with which I will be most happy to put you in touch.

MRS. L. L. J.—If your nose is merely too fleshy, reduction by means of a reducing cream and astringent lotions should be effective. I will put you in touch with these measures if you will write more fully. If the shape is at fault, constituting a deformity, you could have a plastic operation done, for which you should consult only a reputable surgeon. Do not allow yourself to be persuaded into treatment at the hands of those who have no recognized standing as scientists in a matter of such supreme

importance. There are many charlatans masquerading as cosmetic surgeons. I will refer you to a recognized specialist in this branch of work if you wish.

LILLIAN B.—The use of a good face powder is not injurious if cold cream is rubbed into the skin first, and the powder then lightly dusted on, but not rubbed into the pores. The kind of powder to use depends on your coloring. For further advice, send self-addressed, stamped envelope.

MISS N. M.—Here is a pomade for giving a rose tint to the nails and lips: Eosin, ten parts, spermaceti, thirty parts; white wax, thirty parts; vaseline, four hundred and ten parts. As for your other question, you will have to send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope for private reply. Please repeat your request.

MISS LEILA L.—Scars which result from extreme cases of acne, or from abscesses, also the scar tissue which forms at the site of an incision, can be completely removed by a process employed in the hands of those skilled in its use. I will gladly put you in touch with an expert who does this work. It is stated that scars, even those leading to extreme contractures, may be softened by painting them with: Pepsin, 5.0; acid hydrochloric (0.2 per cent), 100.0. After a while they may be massaged and stretched without pain. Try this. Your druggist will put up the solution. It cannot possibly harm you, and may not only relieve the pain but correct an unsightly blemish.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



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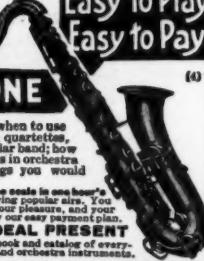
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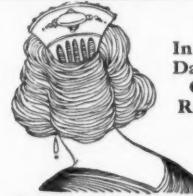
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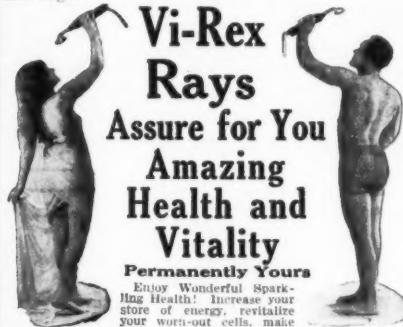
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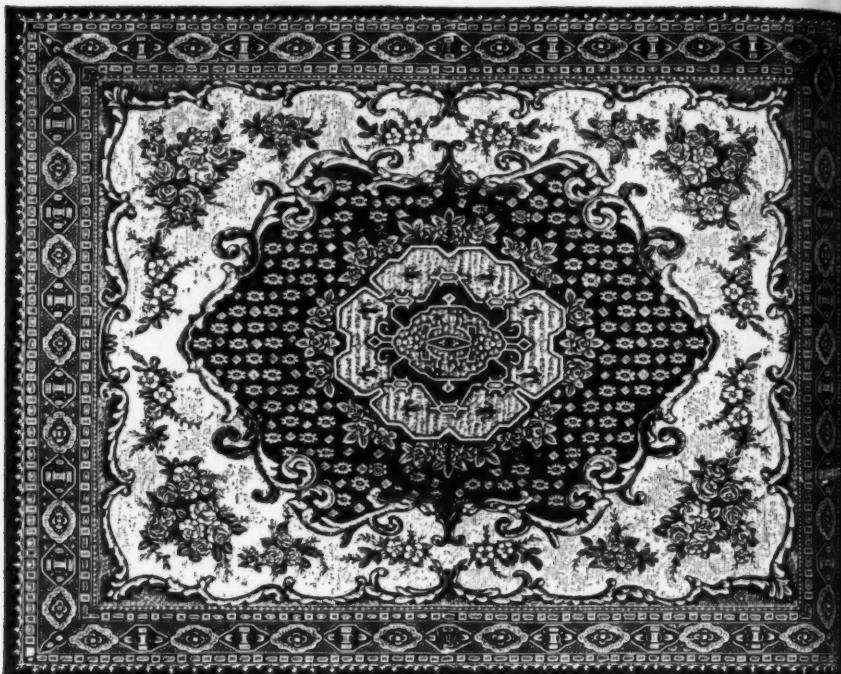
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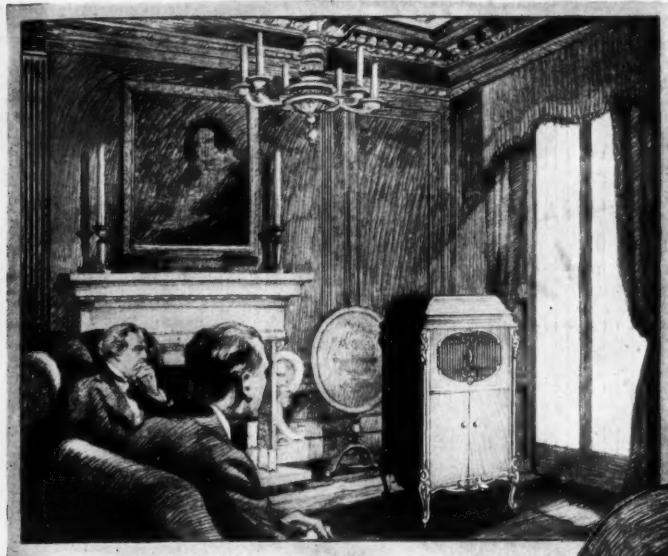
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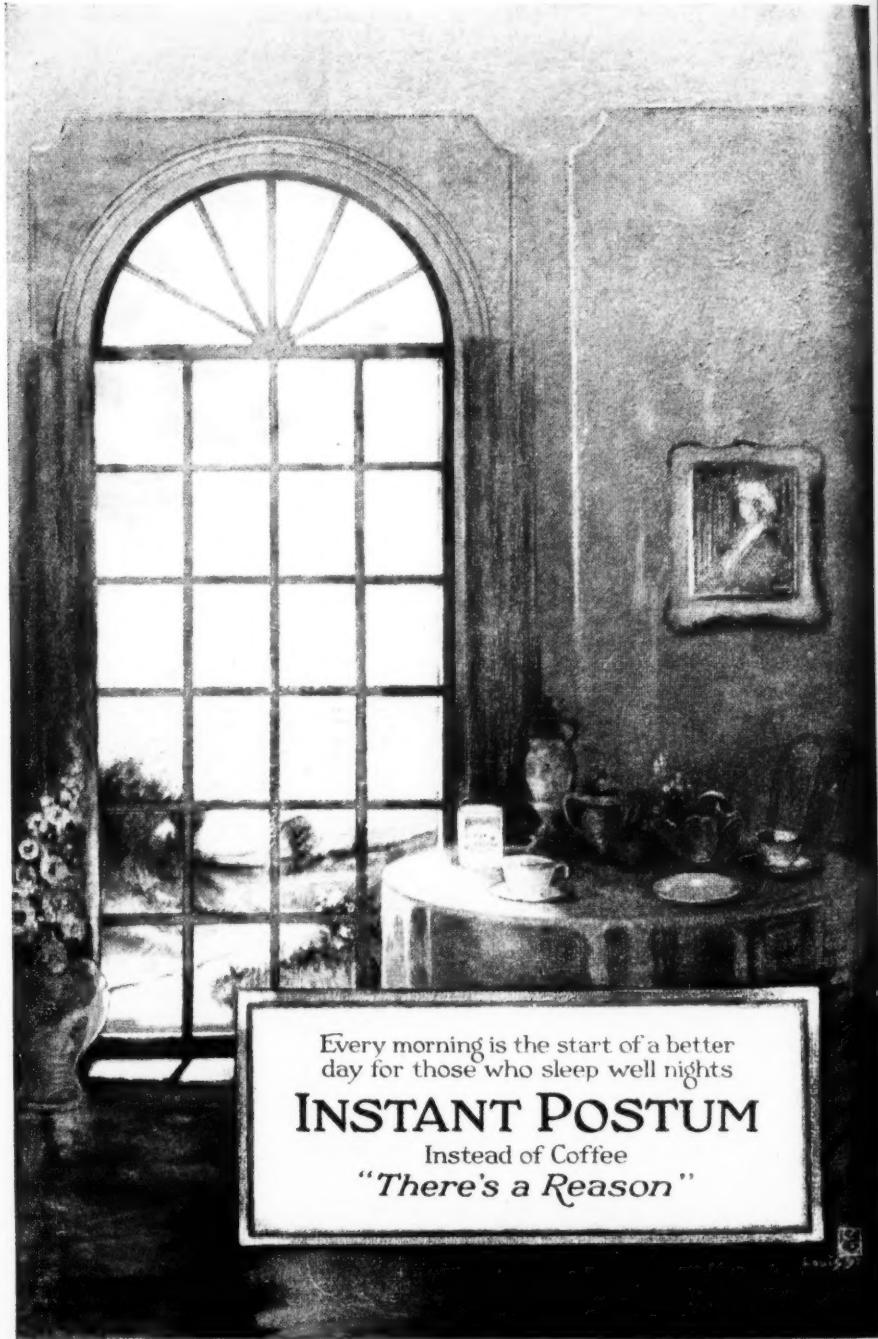
1002 *Rustle of Spring . Godowsky*

13021 { *I'll Take You Home Again,
Kathleen . Theo. Karle
and Crescent Male Trio*
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